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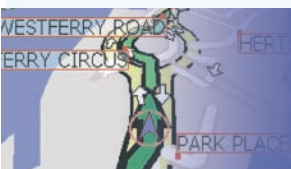
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CONTENTS

features

ISSUE 8

- On the road with your PDA** Navigation on the move **49**
- The ins and outs of installing software** Some practical help **55**
- It's all in the interface** A look at how we interface with our handhelds **69**
- Getting to grips with HandBase 3** Part 7 of our tutorial series **77**

Regulars

- Editorial** Exit Sony—all part of handheld evolution? **5**
- Handheld News** The latest announcements, gossip and plans **6**
- The bit box** Gadgets, accessories and books **15**
- Palm OS Software** A roundup of the latest Palm OS software **19**
- Symbian Software** The latest software for Symbian handhelds **27**
- Pocket PC Software** New software for Pocket PCs **35**
- A Closer Look** Reviews of the latest new hardware..... **42**
- The Game ZONE** The best in recreational software **63**
- Worth a read...** News and reviews from the world of electronic texts **83**
- On the net** What's happening in the online PDA world **86**
- Hints & Tips** Get the absolute most from your handheld..... **88**
- Q&A** Your PDA questions answered by our editorial team **92**

EDITORIAL

Sony's recent decision (see page 6) to exit the PDA market has come as quite a shock to the handheld computing world. Okay, so Sony will continue developing devices for the domestic Japanese market, and the company's official statement suggested that it *may* consider resuming operations at some point, but for the foreseeable future we'll see no more new Clies.

Following Psion's similarly dramatic pull-out from the PDA world almost three years ago, this raises the inevitable question of where the PDA world is going. Though the two departures were equally unexpected for most of us, Sony's position was totally different from Psion's. In relative terms, Psion was a tiny company with little market presence outside Europe. In contrast, Sony is a global organisation with an established reputation and presence in almost every computer shop, gadget shop, duty-free and electronics emporium around the world.

So how could a company with so much clout fail to succeed? Well, in truth, with a global PDA market share routinely around the 15% mark, it would be hard to claim that Sony wasn't making an impact. Far more likely, Sony's disappointment was that the fledgeling PDA market simply hasn't grown in the way it had hoped since the inception of its Clie range four years ago. The bulk of future growth in the PDA market almost certainly lies in the evolution of hybrid PDA/phone devices, and that's one area into which Sony's Clie range never ventured.

Another possible consideration is Sony's unusually high development costs for its PDA range. The rate at which Sony released new Clie models was far beyond what any

Palmtop User is...

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Steve Turczyn - Technical Editor (Palm OS)

Anne Johnstone - Senior Contributor

Thanks to all the contributors whose names appear within the magazine. Thanks also to all those who have kindly supplied their products for evaluation.

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other PDA manufacturer has attempted, with almost 20 new models appearing in the Clie's brief lifespan. One can't help wondering whether such a high turnover in models really contributed to sales or merely had the opposite effect, as buyers waited for that next 'great' model that was inevitably just a few months away.

The decision may even have been made under entirely different reasoning: it's been suggested that the overlap in functionality between Sony's forthcoming PlayStation Portable (whose potential market dwarfs the entire PDA world) and the Clies was going to present too much of an internal conflict of interests.

As with any market, the PDA world has seen concepts and manufacturers come and go: MicroWriter, the Apple Newton, SpringBoard expansion, Psion, Sony. It's all part of evolution, and all part of the unpredictable world of cutting-edge technology.

Steve Clack - Publishing Editor

Handheld News

What's new in the world of handheld computing

No more Clies—at least for now

Sony has announced that it will not be releasing any new Clie handhelds outside Japan until further notice, elaborating that it views wireless communications as central to its business strategy and that it plans to focus on collaboration with Sony Ericsson. Warranties for all existing Clie users will be honoured, and the current Clie lineup will continue to be sold for the time being.

www.sonystyle.com

Three-way battle still rages

According to the latest figures for the first quarter of 2004 from Canalys, and disregarding the mass-market Series 60 phones from Nokia, the battle for dominance in the handheld industry is predominantly three-way. HP and palmOne both shipped around

250,000 handhelds, while Sony Ericsson trailed slightly in third place with 175,000 UIQ smartphones. The next highest figures from traditional handheld manufacturers were 68,000 for RIM and 43,000 for Dell.

www.canalys.com

New Zires arrive

palmOne has revamped its consumer Zire range with two new models. The £130 Zire 31 keeps the ultra low cost approach of its predecessors but adds a colour screen and headphone socket for MP3 playback. The £230 Zire 72 improves on the existing 71 model with redesigned hardware, a 1.2 megapixel camera, video capture software and Bluetooth. See pages 43-45 for reviews of both Zire models.

www.palmone.com

Windows Mobile 2003 SE

Microsoft has unveiled Windows Mobile 2003 Second Edition, expected to appear in products from July onwards. The biggest improvement is in support for screens of different size (up to VGA) and orientation, with the user able to switch between portrait and landscape modes as needed. Other additions include an improved Start menu, which will remember recently-used applications, and a native MMS client for smartphones.

www.microsoft.com



Megapixel Nokia

Nokia has announced its latest Series 60 Symbian smartphone, the 7610, with 8MB of internal flash memory, a 64MB 'reduced size' MMC card and a camera capable of 1152x864 pixels. Kodak software on the phone allows pictures to be uploaded to a virtual photo album on the web and shared online, while a desktop video utility allows captured video clips to be stitched together and optimised into personal movies.

www.nokia.com



New BenQ UIQ smartphone

The BenQ P31 is the latest UIQ device to be announced, with tri-band GSM/GPRS, a 1.3 megapixel camera, Bluetooth and SD card expansion. The 118mm (4.7") body also includes a traditional numeric keyboard, providing both handwriting recognition using the stylus or predictive text for data entry. Release dates and European availability details were unavailable at the time of going to press.

www.benq-eu.com

Motorola goes Microsoft

Motorola has announced two cutting edge smartphones. The MPx100 smartphone will run 'Windows Mobile 2003 for Smartphone' and feature a traditional 'candy bar' design. As is now becoming the norm, there's a 1.3 megapixel camera with flash, integrated MP3 player and instant messaging and MMS capabilities.

The second device, the MPx, will run Windows Mobile 2003 software and is a dual-hinge device, operating as both a clamshell phone, and in landscape mode as a pocket computer with wide screen and full QWERTY keyboard. Specifications include a 1.3 megapixel camera with flash, and both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth.

www.motorola.com



Imaging handheld to the nth

Austrian manufacturer Tel.Me has announced a smartphone with the highest imaging specification yet seen in any handheld. The T939 runs Windows CE and features a 2.1 megapixel camera with flash and optical focus, along with printing and editing software.

www.telme.at/en

Lightning fast

Asus has demonstrated its upcoming wireless MyPal A730 handheld, based on Intel's next-generation XScale chip, 'Bulverde', running at a speedy 520MHz. The processor includes the same MMX multimedia instructions developed by Intel for the Pentium processor line. The A730 also features a 480x640 pixel display, both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth, a 1.3 megapixel camera and 128MB of RAM.

Also demonstrated was Asus' Sony Ericsson P900-style A8100 smartphone, based on Windows Mobile for Smartphones. Like the P900, the A8100's keypad flips open to reveal a larger LCD display.

www.asus.com

Screens reach 800x480 pixels

Samsung is to introduce a Windows-based handheld with a 5 inch diagonal, 800x480 pixel display. The Nexio XP30 will have a 400MHz Intel XScale PXA255 processor, and will have integral Wi-Fi.

www.samsung.com

Another UIQ smartphone

Taiwan-based Arima has unveiled another Symbian UIQ smartphone design, with similar specifications to the Sony Ericsson

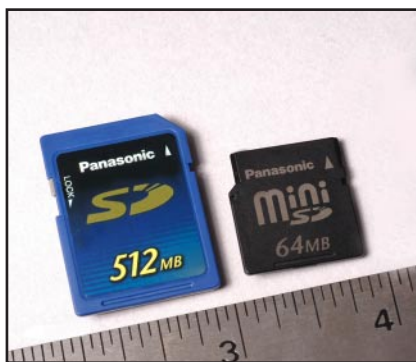
P900, but with 1.3 megapixel camera and SD/MMC expansion slot.

www.arima.com.tw

Philips joins Symbian

Philips Electronics has now signed on as a member of the elite Symbian Platinum Program, the select group of companies with access to Symbian developer tools, standards and source code.

www.philips.com



SD cards get even smaller

Electronics giant Panasonic has announced the world's smallest flash memory cards, with its new miniSD (Secure Digital) format. Initially to be available in sizes of 32MB, 64MB and 128MB, the new cards occupy only 40% of the volume of the already diminutive SD storage devices, making them particularly suitable for use in smartphones.

www.panasonic.com

Series 60, Panasonic style

Yet another Series 60 Symbian smartphone has been announced by Panasonic. The X700 is distinguished from earlier Series 60

units by being a true clamshell design, and by being the first to support the new miniSD Card format (see above).

www.panasonic.com

Treo 600 updates

palmOne has released a free update to its Treo 600. The 1.12 ROM update includes improvements in audio quality and stability at high volumes, plus the name change in all software from Handspring to palmOne.

www.palmone.com

Open source multimedia

The Helix community has released the first version of its open source multimedia player for Symbian. Based on the Helix DNA client, this supports most common mobile video formats, including RealAudio and RealVideo. Version 1.0 runs on Series 60 devices only.

symbian.helixcommunity.org

Next-gen N-Gage

Nokia has launched the N-Gage QD, the successor to the quirky original N-Gage. Still essentially a Series 60 smartphone at heart, the QD is a more compact device with a hot-swappable MMC expansion slot for instant gaming, together with longer battery life, improved gaming controls, a brighter screen and a new Arena launcher



application. In addition, the much-ridiculed 'side talking' system is gone, with a conventional microphone and earpiece arrangement now being employed.

www.nokia.com

CF GPS solution

Garmin has announced a new CompactFlash GPS module, the 'cf Que 1620', with bundled voice-guided navigation software for Pocket PC devices that works with Garmin's line of MapSource CDs.

www.garmin.com/mobile



2210 update

HP has released a ROM image update for its iPAQ h2210 handheld. The free 1.10 update fixes a number of bugs and localization issues, as well as adding extra features such as alphanumeric SMS addressing, a self-test function, Wake on Ring functionality and support for HP's extended battery.

www.hp.com

Wi-Fi flaw found

AusCERT has announced a flaw in the 802.11b (Wi-Fi) specification that allows an attacker armed with a standard handheld to shut down all traffic within range.

www.auscert.org.au

Express Info

Handmark Express is a new wireless information service for connected Palm OS handhelds. With a direct Internet client that works on a subscription basis (\$7 a month), customised and optimised content is delivered direct to the handheld, covering (largely US-specific) news, market data,

weather, sports scores, maps and directions, directory lookups, movie times and ticket purchases. Non-US users should check Handmark's web site for coverage information.

www.handmark.com

Palm OS gets new Java runtime

Available now from palmOne is an ARM-processor-optimised Micro Environment Java 2 Micro Edition (J2ME) runtime for end users, compatible with all Tungsten handhelds, the Zire 71/72 and Treo 600 smartphone. The runtime is free for Tungsten handhelds bought after Oct. 1, 2003. Otherwise, it's a \$6 download from Palm's Software Connection site.

www.palmone.com

Palm OS gets email built in

PalmSource and Visto Corporation have announced Mobile Mail 5.0 for Palm OS 5.x and Palm OS 6.x (Cobalt). The new email program will be built into Palm OS in future, and supports POP3, IMAP and Microsoft Exchange servers, as well as 'push' email and encrypted authentication. Corporate IT departments will be able to use Mobile Mail with Visto Mobile Enterprise Server.

www.palmsource.com

Tungsten C updated again

palmOne has released a second ROM update for the Tungsten C handheld, adding enhancements to 'intra-campus connectivity/roaming', Wi-Fi timeouts and a few bug fixes, including fixing the problem where the bottom 10 pixels of the screen becomes insensitive.

www.palmone.com



Treo 600 video recording

MovieRec has established a first by enabling video recording on the Treo 600. In addition to recording, playing back and managing multiple movie clips, you can adjust capture rates and settings and export to external storage in MPEG1 or H.263 format.

www.infinityball.com

Treo software updater

palmOne has released a major Updater (v1.12) for the Treo 600, with different customised versions for the various network carriers around the world. The update includes a number of bug fixes designed to enhance call quality and performance.

www.palmone.com

CE and Mobile divisions merge

In an effort to reduce the 'time to market' of new versions of its mobile operating system, Microsoft has announced that it will be merging its Windows CE kernel and Windows Mobile divisions into a single division, entitled Mobile and Embedded Devices.

www.microsoft.com

Graffiti 1 vindicated

A summary judgement has been issued in palmOne's favour, dismissing Xerox Corporation's claim that the original Graffiti gesture writing system infringed a Xerox patent for its Unistrokes system. The legal case was the main driver in the adoption of a licensed version of CIC's Jot in Graffiti 2. It's not yet clear whether the original Graffiti will reappear in palmOne products.

www.palmone.com

Where she stops nobody knows

Palm Digital Media has released version 2.5 of its ebook reader for Palm OS and Pocket PC under a new name, eReader, and relaunched the company under the new eReader brand. The company started life as Peanut Press, was bought by Palm in 2001, sold to PalmSource, then sold again to PalmGear, which itself was merged with Power By Hand.

www.ereader.com

Clie updates

Sony has released updates for its TJ27, TJ37 and TH55 handhelds, addressing power issues on the first two and updating all the main applications on the TH55.

www.ita.sel.sony.com/support

BackupBuddy 2

BackupBuddy 2.0 for Palm OS has been announced and made available to the public. New features include the selection of specific backups as 'snapshots' to be maintained permanently, the maintenance of a database of all file changes and deletions each time you back up, plus restoration of your handheld to any previous state. There's also a scheduled 'Automatic Sync' feature.

www.bluenomad.com

Camera-less Treos

In response to fears over corporate security, Sprint (in the USA) has released a version of the Treo 600 without a built-in camera.

www.sprint.com

World's smallest smartphone?

Orange has announced the SPV C500, running Windows Mobile 2003. It weighs in at a mere 100g (3.5oz) and includes 64MB of RAM, Bluetooth and a miniSD Card expansion slot. The SPV C500 will be available within the next few months.

www.orange.co.uk

New generation Bluetooth

The Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) has announced a new prototype specification, 'Enhanced Data Rate' (EDR). This aims to provide faster data transmission and reduce power consumption at the same time, offering up to three times the data rate of conventional Bluetooth devices. It also makes it possible to use multiple Bluetooth functions simultaneously. Reduced power consumption should improve the battery life of Bluetooth devices.

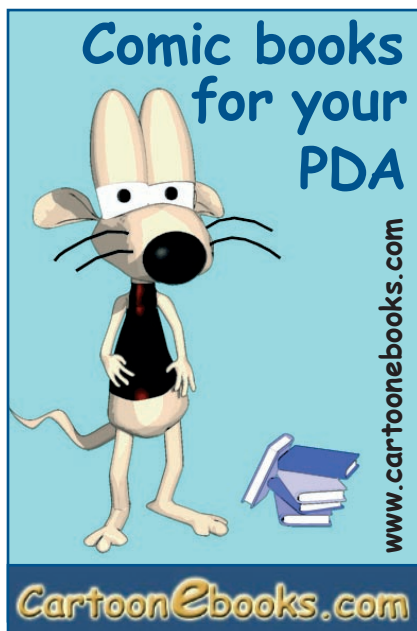
www.bluetooth.org



iPAQs in space

According to NASA, crew aboard its spacecraft and the International Space Station are using HP iPAQ h5550 handhelds to assist them with a variety of tasks, including recording daily crew procedures, personal memos and (incredibly) email. Astronauts are also using the handhelds to listen to music, read ebooks and view photos from home.

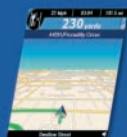
www.nasa.gov





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THE BIT BOX

A quick look at some of the latest PDA-related accessories and gadgets...

Bluetooth landline...

A Bluetooth connection between your PDA and mobile phone is a great way to get email and web access while on the move. The trouble is that when you're within reach of a conventional landline, perhaps while staying in a hotel room, the cellular connection is an unnecessary expense. On the other hand, a cable connection between your handheld, a suitable modem and the phone socket normally requires a mess of extra hardware and cables. The new **Socket Cordless 56k Modem** gives you the best of both worlds, with a compact (79x27x73mm/3.1x1.1x2.9") fax modem that plugs straight into a conventional landline phone socket. Rather than attaching to your PDA via a length of wire, the little blue box communicates with your

handheld via Bluetooth, so you can leave it right next to the phone socket while still roaming around the room with your PDA.

As well as working with most Windows and Macintosh laptops, the Socket is compatible with Pocket PC 2002, Windows Mobile 2003, and Palm devices running OS 5.2 upwards. The lightweight 90g (3.2oz) unit has its own speaker and an integral rechargeable battery that runs for around three hours between charges. £99 including VAT.

www.socketcom.com

...and Bluetooth keyboards

After a seemingly endless wait, the first Bluetooth PDA keyboards are at last appearing. Infrared keyboards always tended to be temperamental when it came to positioning the handheld and keyboard for a reliable connection, but the new **Stow-away Bluetooth Wireless** keyboard works in any position. The lightweight keyboard is currently compatible with most *recent*



Bluetooth-equipped Pocket PC devices and Symbian UIQ/Series 60 smartphones, with software for Palm OS handhelds due later this year. \$150.

www.thinkoutside.com

Original cases

A welcome change from the vast array of anonymous-looking leather cases on the market, Proporta's new impact-resistant **Crystal Cases** are stylish and practical. Apart from allowing you to read your PDA screen with the case closed, these transparent, high-impact plastic shells have a smooth, sleek feel that's exceptionally comfortable to hold. Another interesting design, Proporta's new **Aluminium-Lined Leather cases** look like a well-padded leather case on the outside, but are reinforced in the front and back with a sturdy sheet of lightweight aluminium, which makes them very tough. They're available

in two styles, both with storage space for credit cards, a stylus and SD storage cards, plus optional belt clasps. £15/£25 plus VAT. Check the web site below for current availability for Palm OS and Pocket PC models.

www.proporta.com



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£28.50 (S7)

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£29 (S7)

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- Use with Scanners too
- Unique compact 9-pin version
- Available from £7

Car Stands



- Series 5/5mx, Revo, (Series 7 soon)
- Unique, "Holeless" air vent mounted design
- Easy to use
- Around £30 UK



3 GHz Processor, 120 Go, UMTS ...



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forums

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www.pda247.com

News

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since 1999 with opinion and views
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reviews



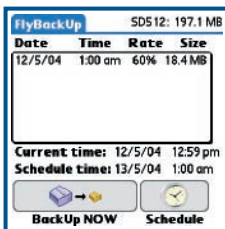
Palm OS SOFTWARE



We take a look at the latest software for your Palm OS handheld or communicator...

A fly in the backups

No matter how often you HotSync, it's still prudent to perform additional backups to a plug-in storage card on the handheld itself.

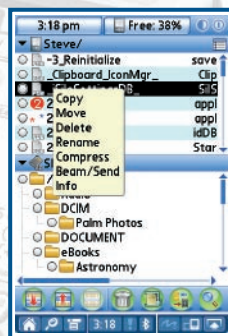


When you're away from base these may be the only means of saving your work against disaster, and, ironically, a full restore from a card-based backup tends to be more dependable than a restore via HotSync, not to mention a lot faster. **FlyBackUp** uses fast compression techniques (gained from the company's popular FlyZip product) to copy the entire contents of your handheld's internal memory into a single archive file. It's admirably fast, and achieves at least 50% compression on your data, which can be backed up manually or at preset intervals. Backups can also be encrypted to prevent their contents from being read by others. There are two major snags with the program, however. The first is that there's no option to create incremental backups, so each one is a relatively large file and the backups take longer to perform. Also, there's currently no facility to restore single files from within the backup—it's all or nothing. Without these important features, users are better off with one of the more mature backup products, such as

BackupBuddyVFS (www.bluenomad.com), BackupMan (www.bitsnbolts.com) or even the new MegaCommander (see below).

Mega file manager

Many Palm OS users never feel the need for any kind of file management software, but if you want complete control over the files in your internal memory and storage card, the new **MegaCom**

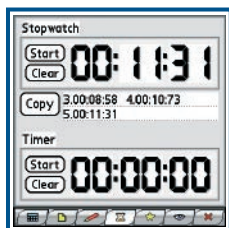


(**MegaCommander**) has lots to offer. As with other MegaSoft2000 products, the rather flashy interface won't please everyone, but everything is logically laid out and easy to navigate. The optional split-screen display works best on 320x480 hi-res devices, with elegant drag-and-drop copying and moving of files between the two window panes. Pop-up contextual menus make it easy to tap-and-hold on a file or folder and perform any operation with a single tap, including built-in zip compression, or to launch, rename or access extensive file, folder and volume information. Rather than merely compressing single files, there's a full backup system for saving the contents of your entire memory

to storage card, complete with the ability to restore single or selected files. The lack of an incremental backup facility is one of the few criticisms of this otherwise fairly exhaustive toolkit, but backups can be scheduled for automatic operation, and can also be set to execute after each HotSync. To complete MegaCom's comprehensive file management capabilities, there's a search facility to track down files by entering just a few characters from within its filename. Finally, deleted files can be put into a 'Trash' area if desired, making it easy to restore them again if needed. \$13, from www.megasoft2000.com.

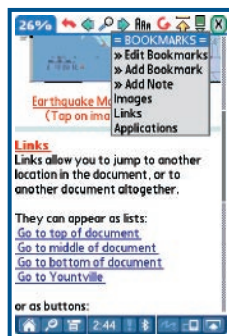
Quick-access tools

A handy collection of tools, all accessed via a pop-up icon bar at the bottom of your screen, **Crystal Popup Suite** is a neat idea that's been well executed. Assign a keypress or Graffiti stroke to bring up the toolbar, and you're just one tap away from a scientific calculator, a 12-slot memopad, basic sketchpad, timer/stopwatch and an application launcher. The real speed benefit comes from the fact that when you close the suite, you're taken straight back to the application you were working on. This makes the memopad useful as a multiple clipboard to access frequently-used text blocks, and allows the calculator to paste its results straight into the underlying application. The stopwatch and timer include a countdown alarm and lap facility, and you can copy lap times and total elapsed time to the clipboard. Crystal Popup Suite's launcher brings up a screen showing the names of 30 pre-selected applications that can be tapped on to launch. \$12, from www.newborngames.se.



DOC reader deluxe

A program that's evolved from a basic Palm 'DOC' file viewer, **TealDoc's** new version 6 is a complete re-write of the application, with many advanced features and, for the first time, document editing as well.



There's a thoroughly revised interface that's a joy to work with, and takes advantage of all the latest hi-res and large-screened devices. An effectively unlimited variety of font sizes and typefaces are supported via the bundled freeware FontBucket utility, or you can just use the default Palm OS fonts. A quick scan through the on-screen menus reveals a rather daunting number of configuration options, though virtually all of them can be safely left at their defaults if you prefer.

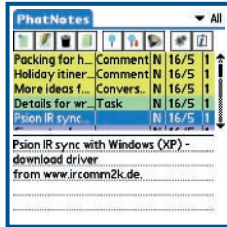
Highlights of the new version include very smooth auto-scrolling, document notes as well as bookmarks, and quick lookup of highlighted words via the excellent BDicty Pro Dictionary (available separately, from www.beiks.com). Editing features include search and replace, plus options to strip HTML tags and extra line breaks. Documents can be saved into TealDoc native format (as well as the standard DOC), which allows you to include images from Tealpoint's own TealPaint application and add hyperlinks and other advanced formatting options. TealDoc can also be configured to handle raw text ('.txt') files stored on expansion card. All in all, TealDoc is now the last word in Palm DOC readers. \$20, from www.tealpoint.com.

Ultimate note-taker

A well established Pocket PC product that's recently been ported to Palm OS, **PhatNotes** is strictly for those who need to manage a *lot* of notes. The notes themselves are plain text only, just like those in the built-in Palm Memo Pad, but PhatNotes adds every conceivable option to categorise, colour code, prioritise and otherwise arrange your notes to make them easier to manage. Advanced filtering lets you view notes that fall into the required categories or were created or modified within certain dates, though strangely there's no option to filter out those containing a pre-defined text string—instead they have to be scanned through one by one, using the program's find function. There are some good advanced features though, including the ability to link selected notes to each other—though this can be a little clumsy to use—and a facility to look up addresses and send emails directly from PhatNotes. The part of this product that's most likely to make it compelling is the powerful Windows desktop counterpart (included in the price), which allows snippets of text to be dragged from other Windows applications (or pasted via the clipboard) and then synchronized back to the handheld. The desktop application also includes full text filtering, its own spell checker, and import/export for Microsoft Outlook notes and email messages. \$30, from www.phatware.com.

And more notes

Taking a completely different approach to PhatNotes above, **Easy Notes** starts off by importing your existing Memo Pad entries, then lets you edit and add new



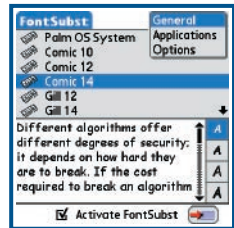
ones containing any combination of text, basic sketches and voice recordings via its multi-tabbed entry screen. You can add icons to help



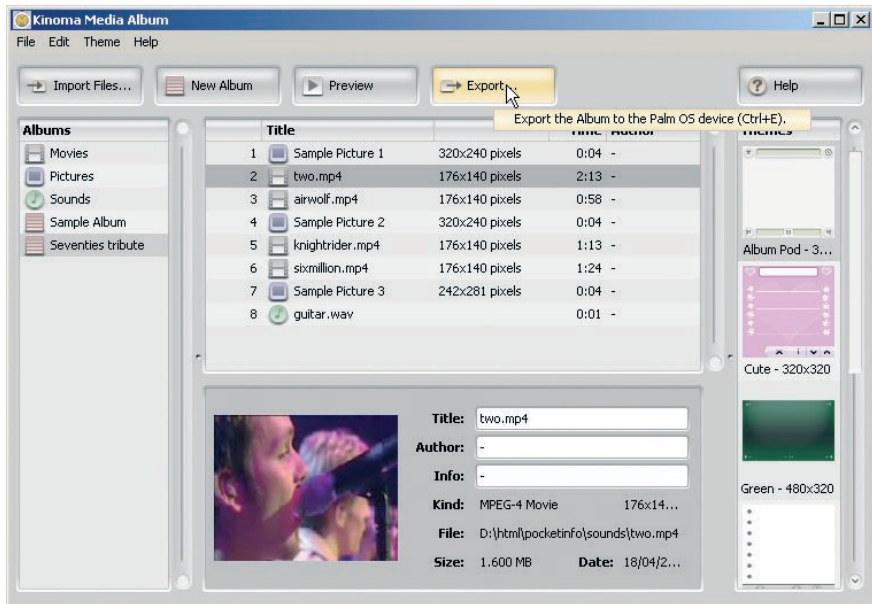
identify each entry, and include reminder alarms for any time and date. The basic concept is good, but there's no import of existing voice notes, no synchronization of your new hybrid notes back to the desktop, and no way to filter or sort entries on the handheld. The sketching module has a rudimentary set of shape drawing tools, and you can choose any pen colour, but it produces rather crude, low-res scribbles. Finally, the voice note facility only works with Palm-branded devices running Palm OS 5.1 and beyond. With a little more refinement, Easy Notes could become a powerful application, but in the current (version 1.1.2) incarnation it's lacking too many important features. \$15, from www.binarygarden.com.

Flexible fonts

If you feel the urge to change the fonts on your handheld, you'll find that most applications offer a choice of only four sizes. **FontSubst**



makes it possible to substitute all four of these for something different: either larger or smaller, or a different typeface entirely. Previous attempts at such low-level tweaks to the operating system have generally been rather unstable, but we found FontSubst to work without problems in all of the 30 or so applications we tried. Because the new fonts are set to work globally, they'll appear almost everywhere: as body text,



in menus and dialog boxes, and inside selection buttons. There are a few exceptions, either where applications use their own custom fonts, or where you're already using a font tool such as FontBucket. In the final analysis you'll be hard pressed to find something that's more readable than Palm's carefully chosen default font, but FontSubst comes with a decent selection, and you can import more using third party software. Naturally, if the typeface you choose is bigger/wider than the Palm default, you may find that some of the text in dialogs and menus gets chopped off. To help prevent this, FontSubst lets you set a different font set for each application if you wish, and even change the four typefaces individually for each application. Fonts can also be moved to storage card if desired. It may take you a while to configure FontSubst for all your applications, but once done, it should need no further attention. \$12, from www.palmgear.com.

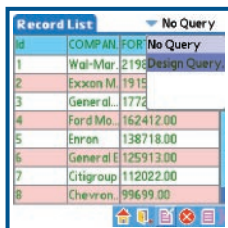
Palm media hub

Whereas Kinoma's well known Producer product is purely for video clips, the new **Media Album** widens things to include pictures and sound clips, organised in standalone albums in a predefined order. This beats picking items manually from alphabetic lists of media files, and you'll almost certainly be able to think of a use for such an album. The only downside to putting things in albums is that items which are present in more than one will necessarily use at least twice as much expansion card space. As you'd expect with Kinoma products, support of video, image and sound file formats is exemplary, and Media Album will almost certainly be able to import every item you point it at. Once imported, just drag each item into an album and then drag within that album to set a play order. Finally, click on 'Export' and go off to make a cup of tea, as video conversion is very slow. The faster your PC the better, especially as even simple mouse operations

take a second or so to register on a modest PC (less than 1GHz). On your handheld, a bundled copy of the latest Kinoma Player presents your albums flawlessly. There's a definite Mac feel throughout, evidenced by the non-standard (to Windows) interface and lack of right-click support. A Mac version is due later this year. \$40, from www.kinoma.com.

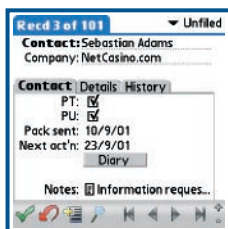
Access companion

When it comes to creating databases on the PC desktop, Microsoft Access is most definitely not for the novice. It requires a solid knowledge of database concepts and terminologies, and makes heavy weather of simple database tasks, unless you're already an experienced Access programmer. If you really need the power of Access and want to work on files while on the move, **AccessPlus** is worthy of investigation though. The ugly, visually crude interface uses a series of intractable icons for navigation, which is very off-putting at first, but if you can get past the interface then this is a powerful application that can create databases from scratch as well as edit those imported or synchronized via the desktop. There's support for 20 Access field types, plus an SQL query editor. \$20, from www.smartcell.com.



Database update

Taken over by DataViz some time ago now, **SmartList To Go** (previously ThinkDB) has been updated to version 3. Though on the



surface this capable database package looks barely different from its predecessor, there's now full hi-res support, better import/export, storage card compatibility and a much-improved PC desktop companion application, including basic syncing with Microsoft Access files. Although the handheld application lacks some of the power and flexibility of its primary rival, HanDBase (particularly when it comes to producing polished, professional-looking databases), SmartList's simple forms designer is quicker and easier to use, and it supports full-screen mode on 320x480 displays. For those new to databases, there's also an excellent setup wizard to help get you started. \$50, from www.dataviz.com.

Movie mogul

If you're anything of a film buff, the latest **Leonard Maltin's Movie & Video Guide 2004** is simply essential. It starts off with

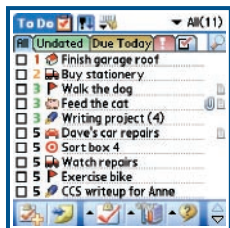


brief but intelligent critical reviews of more than 20,000 titles, including supplementary information on certification, formats, and a star rating based on the review. Digging a little deeper reveals a wealth of additional features, including cross referencing of the 30,000 or so cast members and 5,000 directors to create on-the-fly filmographies, and an endless array of custom searches by date, genre, rating, awards, and so on. As well as the built-in data, all squeezed into little more than 2MB of space, there's a complete 'My Movies' database shell into which you can add your own film details, or simply import and edit those from the built-in data. Far from just a simple enhancement to the main product, this feature represents a highly sophisticated application in its own right, with space to document

every conceivable detail of your favourite films, including your own short review and complete purchase details if you've bought the film on DVD, video, etc. It can even be used to keep track of film rentals. To round things off, there's an 'Events' section showing a list of the latest DVD releases, film festivals and film premieres, all updateable via a dedicated (PC and Mac) desktop conduit, or wirelessly from the handheld itself. Everything is attractively presented in an interface that's a model of good software design, which helps to make this something you'll undoubtedly spend hours browsing through, adding and editing your own 'My Movies' entries along the way. Overall, this is an immensely impressive package at a remarkably good price, and gets our highest possible recommendation. \$16, from www.landware.com.

New To Do Lists

At first glance this brand new application looks like a powerful replacement to the built-in To Do List, but on closer inspection, **ToDo Now** 1.0



misses out a few important features from the very program it's trying to out-perform, and some of its 'advanced' features don't offer quite what you'd expect. Although its colourful interface looks undeniably stylish, the array of over-sized buttons and icons all conspire to swallow up your precious available screen space. It's all well presented, though, with separate tabs for undated, overdue, completed and 'Due today' items. You can add icons to each entry (sensibly using the standard Agendus/DateBk5 format), and there's a good template system for saving and re-using text blocks for commonly-used entries. More ambitious, entries can be attached (i.e. linked) to each other, to Date

Book, Address Book or Memo Pad records, or even to other applications and files, thus providing a quick way to jump from an entry to another item (but not back).

The appointment, address and memo links work well, even with multiple items, but on a device containing hundreds of files, the process of presenting a pick-list of available application files to link to can take an interminable 30 seconds or more, making this feature little more than useless. The other bad news is that there's no possibility to create repeating entries or to add alarms to To Do items, both fundamental features that most users will be loath to manage without. **ToDo Now** maintains compatibility with existing PIM applications (and therefore any desktop PIM you wish to synchronize with) by dumping all the additional references to icons and links into the memo section of each entry. Beware though, as if you decide to abandon **ToDo Now** and uninstall it, it'll leave your basic To Do List entries peppered with these references, and you'll have to locate and delete them all manually. With some attention to its current limitations, **ToDo Now** could become a credible alternative, but for now it simply has too many ifs, buts and gotchas. \$15, from www.pdapperformance.com.

Power emailer

There's no shortage of serviceable email clients for Palm OS, not least the Versa-Mail application now bundled with most models.



When it comes to high-end features, particularly for corporate users, this new version 2 of **SnapperMail** boasts a few genuine firsts for Palm OS, all in an impressively slick and polished package. Beyond

the usual support for multiple accounts, automated send and receive of messages at pre-defined intervals and a fully editable folder hierarchy for your messages, there's plenty more to impress. SnapperMail works happily with HTML email messages of unlimited length, and incorporates excellent handling of attachments. To help with the latter, Snapper comes bundled with its own file browser, zipping utility and image viewer for previewing attached graphics. Rather than being forced to purge your message folders ruthlessly to avoid overloading the handheld, messages and attachments can be archived automatically to storage card after an allocated period.

Though flexibility is generally excellent, there are still a few compromises: the archiving process can only be set globally across all accounts, and the same goes for the automatic email delivery system. As well as basic POP3 email, SnapperMail works with IMAP4 accounts too, is designed to be compatible with Microsoft Exchange, Lotus Notes/Domino and Novell GroupWise, and supports security features such as SSL/STARTTLS, VPN, and so on. Users have free rein to use an unlimited number of subfolders for message storage. Make no mistake, this industrial strength email client is designed to cope happily with thousands of messages, something most handheld email solutions simply can't manage. Rather than trying to synchronize them all with a corporate server, SnapperMail can be set to limit (and thus speed up) the operation by syncing only those within a specified date range. Another powerful feature that's unique to SnapperMail is 'Ghost messages'. These are emails that are no longer stored on the corporate IMAP4 server, but can still be kept on the handheld for future reference.

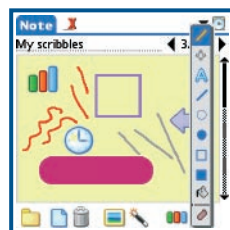
Beyond the impressive feature list, SnapperMail presents an exceptionally well conceived interface, including a 'finger friendly' mode with oversized controls for scrolling, selecting and generally navi-

gating through your messages. SnapperMail is available in four versions, ranging from a \$60 Enterprise Edition that includes all the features mentioned here, to a \$30 Lite version that omits most of the 'corporate' security and advanced folder/filing options.

www.snappermail.com.

Little yellow stickies

Owning a handheld computer hopefully encourages us to reduce the number of little yellow reminder notes we used to have littered



around our desks, but if you can't live without the traditional Post-It™ metaphor, **BugMe! Notepad** may be just the thing. An enhanced version of the multi-platform BugMe! application (see page 73 of the last issue), this latest incarnation (currently for Palm OS only) adds some excellent new features. Based around the ability to create and store an unlimited number of coloured notes scribbled directly onto your handheld screen, this is really a more sophisticated alternative to the standard Note Pad that's included with recent Palm models.

As well as adding alarms, titles and regular text to your scribbled notes, they're now scrollable beyond a single screenful (though only by a limited amount), with a whole selection of pen colours and widths, with basic drawing and painting tools. Perhaps more of gimmick value for most, you can now add icons to your messages, either using standard Agendus/DateBk5-style icon collections, or using the 20 or so built in. Icons can be moved around the page individually until their parent message is saved, so this may be useful for rudimentary maps, schematics, etc. Perhaps more useful, photographs and other images

stored on your handheld can be added to notes, where they can be annotated using the drawing tools. Also, BugMe! Notepad's integral screen capture feature can be used to grab screenshots from almost any application, again with the ability to annotate the resulting image. With so many useful tools to hand, it's a pity that the only way of arranging your ever-expanding collection of snippets is using the standard Palm OS category feature, with no way to filter, arrange or otherwise manage the notes, apart from in alphabetical or date

order. There's a basic list view mode that shows a thumbnail of each note together with its title text, but if you've got a lot of notes your only option is to scroll through the long list. Otherwise this is an excellent idea, and individual notes can be saved as JPEG files for emailing, MMS or Bluetooth/infrared transmission. \$20, from electricpocket.com.

Does it work on my handheld?

Please note that a number of Palm OS applications now require a minimum of OS 5.0 in order to work. Please check the relevant web sites for compatibility with your own device.

Also for Palm OS...

The following programs reviewed in the Symbian and Pocket PC software review sections are also available in Palm OS versions:

SplashID - page 31

Picture Password - page 36

RepliGo - page 37

Zagat To Go 2004 - page 38

PalmtopMan

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Symbian SOFTWARE



A roundup of the latest software releases for your Symbian communicator

Minute-perfect billing

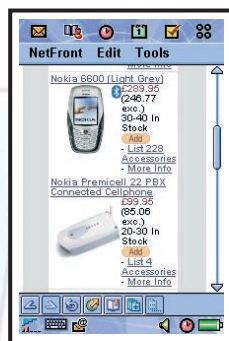
Already established on the Nokia 9200 series, **TimeLog** is now available for Symbian UIQ in expanded form, due to the taller smartphone screen. Up to 12 different clients or projects can now be timed independently, with a simple tap on the 'Stop'/'Go' icons or a press on the Jog Dial. As with the 9210 version, there's an editable project note, readouts of both cumulative and current period times, plus logging of all activity to generic text files, for later processing on your desktop. A detailed help file completes a very useful application for anyone needing to bill clients or account for time to the nearest minute. £10, from 3lib.ukonline.co.uk.

TimeLog			
John Doe Inc	GO	0:06	4:17
Palmtop Pubs	STOP	0:00	
David Bizzell	STOP	1:00	
Swingler	STOP	0:52	
Clove	STOP	0:25	
Customer 6	STOP	0:07	
Customer 7	GO	0:01	239:39
Customer 8	STOP	0:29	
Customer 9	STOP	1:00	
Customer AB	STOP	0:05	
Customer 11	STOP	0:00	
Customer 12	STOP	0:00	

Browser wars

It seems somewhat odd to have a browser war flaring up for UIQ devices. The P800 and P900 already come with 'Internet', a fairly capable browser, and Opera for UIQ is a free download, for those that need just a little extra. And now there's **NetFront**, also released as a 'free 45-day demonstration

version', (also for Series 60 and Pocket PC) offering even more features than Opera. In essence, both Opera and NetFront are fighting a war across many mobile computing plat-

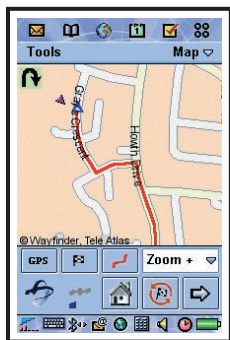


forms and want their name to be associated with the best browsing experience, even on a platform from which they won't make any money. NetFront 3.1 is certainly comprehensive, with a mammoth, tabbed 'Settings' panel that includes control of frames, Javascript, memory and disk caches, language encoding and cookies, plus a lot more. There's also good support for current web technologies, and we were able to use interactive sites such as eBay without difficulty. Just as with NetFront's initial offering for the Nokia 9210 though, version 3.1 is memory hungry and you'll need at least 5MB of free execution memory for it to work smoothly. Even then, NetFront ground to a halt sometimes when trying to access a particularly image-heavy site on our test P800. Still, such pages are designed for desktop memory and processing power, and perhaps it's unreasonable to expect everything to

load perfectly on a handheld. NetFront's interface is also immature in places, with pages part-loading, blanking and then reloading, unresponsive hyperlinks and a fluctuating progress indicator. Like Opera, there's a useful Smart-Fit Rendering view, designed to eliminate horizontal scrolling. Windows aren't handled quite as efficiently, though—the tab paradigm looks good, but each window isn't kept fully rendered and has to be redrawn when brought to the foreground. Finally, like Opera, NetFront can use your desktop's Internet connection when your smartphone is cradled, which can be very useful for seeding a bookmark list or for testing purposes. From www.access-sys-eu.com.

Never get lost again

Perhaps even more comprehensive than established voice-guided navigation products on other handheld platforms, **Wayfinder Mobile Navigator** works in a totally different way. Given that products on its target platform (Symbian) all include GPRS Internet access, all the data and processing power is kept on central servers, with Series 60 and UIQ smartphones receiving instructions as needed. In practice, Wayfinder Mobile Navigator works surprisingly well. The P800 or P900 talks to your GPS receiver wirelessly via Bluetooth, and to the Wayfinder servers via GPRS. Because all voice instructions are stored as sound samples on the smartphone, only specific road names, coordinates and instructions need to be downloaded, keeping typical GPRS data use to a few tens of kilobytes even for a long journey. In addition to the standard



'instruction' view, there's a top-down map option, although turning this on means a lot more downloading from the Wayfinder servers, and increases the GPRS data use by an order of magnitude. Uniquely, Wayfinder's standard subscription comes with full support for the whole of Western Europe, regular updates to the data on the servers (ensuring that map information is always up to date) and even a voice/SMS backup line, should GPRS not be available in a particular area. If you don't already own a Bluetooth GPS, Wayfinder has another version of the product which includes the hardware as well. From €250 for a year, from www.wayfinder.se.

Transforming UIQ

It seems that users generally fall into two distinct camps: those that love customising and tweaking their handheld's interface, and those that would rather stick with the original for simplicity's sake.

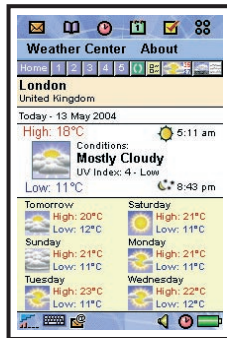


Tracker 4 is perhaps the ultimate utility for confirmed tweekers, with a system of skins that can create the illusion of Windows XP, or Mac OSX, or Terminator, or Babylon 5, or anything else close to your heart. The desktop elements can differ widely in each skin, leading to a bit of a learning curve after switching, but then that's half the fun. There are dozens of third party skins to try out, or you can even roll up your sleeves and create your own. At its core, Tracker is a shortcuts utility, with desktop pages full of links to existing system and third party applications. It can also read your existing PIM databases, providing a Pocket PC-like Today view if needed. Nearly everything is done through

the original applications, although at least Tracker automatically switches itself back to the foreground after an edit operation, following a slight pause. There's a wealth of extra functions, most based around redefining what the P800's few hardware buttons do, but also encompassing basic system task management. And registration of Tracker also covers you for SymbianWare's own TaskMan and FileMan plug-ins, making the system even more comprehensive. No interface is perfect, and Tracker gives anyone complaining about UIQ a decent chance to change things to suit their own way of working. €20, from www.symbianware.com.

Showers likely

Once you get past the fact that it needs the slow and bulky AppForge Booster system (five seconds to start up, another five to shut down, and needing the best part of a megabyte of the P800's execution memory), **Weather Center** is quite impressive. Choose a home city and five more from around the world, tell it to update its forecasts, and within a few seconds you've got predictions for the next week. For each city there's a graphical view (shown here) and a more detailed text version. Buttons at the top of the screen let you switch cities quickly or swap views, and the interface is well implemented. Best of all, Weather Center is quite frugal with your GPRS bandwidth, needing only 30K to update a week's forecasts for all six cities. Weather Center's functionality is also largely contained within Globetrotter (see review on page 31) \$15 per year, from www.neohand.com.



Dot, dot, dash, dash

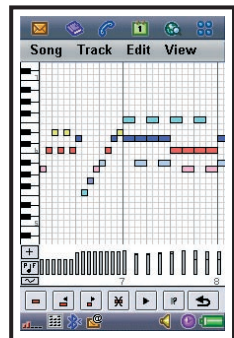
Now here's an interesting idea. **Morse-It** takes any text string (typed in or copied from the clipboard) and converts it to Morse code. But not just a list of dashes and dots—it's



all done for you, using all the weapons in the P800/P900's armoury. With everything turned on, there's the visual interpretation, with white screen and backlight versus black screen and backlight off, the audio interpretation in terms of conventional bleeps, and finally use of the phone's vibrator just to reinforce the Morse patterns being used. Morse-It is not only a useful tool for practicing Morse code, it's impossible to escape the romantic image of relying on it one dark and rainy night when stranded out at sea. Now if the author could only train the P800 camera to recognise and interpret the Morse messages coming back. Free, from guese.free.fr.

DIY ring tones

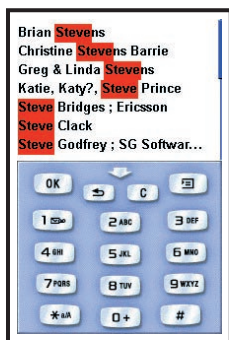
If you're a UIQ smartphone owner who loves to have a different ring tone for each day of the week, and if you happen to be at all musical, **MidiWriterPro** is a fairly comprehensive tool for creating polyphonic (multi-instrument) MIDI tunes. As with MIDI-creation tools on other platforms,



creating music is a fairly long-winded affair, inserting 'voice' notes and then dragging them around as needed. You can zoom the screen right in for easier playing of the note keyboard and there's even a basic recording feature, but you're limited to the raw notes themselves—there's no way to capture timing and duration. Luckily, Midi-WriterPro has a full set of tools designed to help you massage your tune, including quantizing its notes and transposing things to a different key. Like all Zenobyte software, this is polished, fully-featured and does exactly what it claims to do. \$18, from www.zenobyte.com.

Quicker dialling

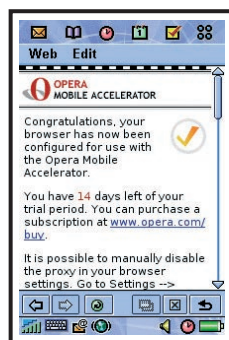
Although UIQ's Contacts application is very capable in terms of managing your contacts, editing notes, adding pictures, and so on, actually looking up and dialling numbers can be a little slow, especially when using it one-handed in Flip-closed mode. **QuickContact** works from the same underlying contact database, presenting the basic names and numbers in a form which is easier to use while on the move. For starters, scrolling up and down your contact list is done a page at a time rather than an entry at a time, which makes a huge difference if you're trying to scroll through in a hurry. In addition, there's a T9-like quick match system, in which you simply key in the name you're looking for without worrying about the usual 'A-B-C', 'D-E-F' cycling. QuickContact displays the matches so far, and you simply stop it and select when the right name appears. Several other 'plug-in' utilities are supplied, including a basic Symbian task manager, a



screen lock (only in Flip-open mode) and a 'Compact memory' function. All good stuff, but many users will already have most of these functions catered for. There's an 'Edit' command, but this just returns you to the appropriate dialog in the built-in Contacts application, which seems a little messy. QuickContact is definitely not a replacement for Contacts itself, but it is useful in its own right, especially when used as one of your Flip-closed shortcuts. \$20, from www.vitotechnology.com.

The need for speed

It seems that the folks at Opera have finally worked out a way to make some money from the UIQ version of their web browser. Given away for free since the P800's launch, in association with Sony Ericsson, version 6.31 includes support for a totally new 'product', the nattily-named **Opera Mobile Accelerator**. Opera itself is a well known quantity on many platforms and scarcely needs a new review. Suffice to say that it's a modern, standards-aware browser that's capable of rendering most web pages. The only real problems are that Opera is very memory hungry (tending to refuse to load large pages) and that the typical bloat of many web sites (inline Javascript designed for Internet Explorer and over-complicated table layouts being the main culprits) means that Opera has to download a lot of bytes that it doesn't really need to. The traditional solution to the latter problem, of handling page bloat, is to use a 'proxy server', a fast machine that downloads pages for you and just sends you the bits your browser can actually use. So redundant animated



effects, large images and complex table layouts are all left behind and you, the user, benefit from faster page loading and lower GPRS data bills. Opera Mobile Accelerator is essentially a subscription-based proxy solution, purpose built to configure neatly into Opera for Symbian smartphones. The idea of charging for the proxy is novel, but then as Opera is free in the first place (at least for UIQ), it's hard to begrudge the developers a few Euros a year. Whether Mobile Accelerator is as effective as its web site claims depends a lot on the types of site you visit. You'll see an improvement in speed with any site that's at all bloated, but be aware that it won't help with secure (https://) connections, such as eBay and online banking. And, obviously, it can't help either with pages that are already efficiently coded and presented. But in Opera's defence, anyone can try out the system for 14 days for free, so it's easy to experiment using the web sites that you're particularly interested in. €30 per year, from www.opera.com/proxy.

Safe as houses

SplashID is already one of the leading secure database utilities on Palm OS and Pocket PC, and this new port to Symbian UIQ is a logical progression. The only trouble is that on this platform EpocWare's Handy Safe (www.epocware.com) got there first by over a year. In terms of functionality, SplashID is a direct competitor, with a couple of dozen entry types ready for use and enough flexibility to store any extra free-form information. Like Handy Safe, there's a desktop (Windows) equivalent with perfect syncing between the two, and



in use SplashID is very difficult to fault. Its Palm OS heritage is obvious throughout, but the interface is clear and easy to work with. \$20, from www.splashdata.com.

Travelling companion

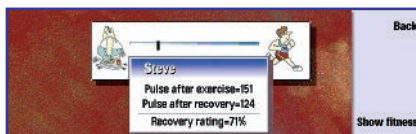
Globetrotter is somewhat less slick, running on top of the AppForge Booster runtime and with the screen often being slow to



update. The intentions are good though, and there's plenty of functionality for travellers. 'World Time' presents three cities at a time, with a thumbnail showing the current weather, while 'Weather Forecasts' shows the week ahead for your home city and (at the tap of a button) up to five more of your choice. 'City Information' and 'Clothing & Plugs' is a useful compendium of relevant information, with the novel addition of a database of mains power plug types and voltages. 'Unit Conversions' and 'Currency' are unsurprising but very comprehensive, while 'Distance & Time' gives you a quick way of working out the local time for a future appointment in another time zone. Finally, 'Tipping' is a handy restaurant tip calculator and comes complete with brief advice for each country. Globetrotter is reasonably frugal with your GPRS connection (30K was needed to update the weather for two cities) and, if you don't mind its speed, size (dozens of files, totalling 700K) and occasional quirks, it's a good all-in-one companion for the regular traveller. \$25, from www.neohand.com.

Couch potato or athlete?

A fairly bare-bones port of a much older Psion application, **Fit4Life** is ideally suited to handheld use, in that you can take it with you into the gym or out on your run. The idea is that the faster your heart rate recovers from exercise, the fitter you are. The program takes your pulse accurately (accepting taps on the Nokia 9200 Series spacebar or jogs of the P800/P900 Jog Dial) immediately after exercise and then



again after a timed three minute recovery period. Fit4Life then does the calculations for you, presenting your fitness rating as a percentage, and also on the aforementioned 'couch potato or athlete' scale. Given your age, height and build, it also advises on weight range and minimum and maximum pulse rates during exercise. Serious fitness freaks may find this all a little trite, but it's a useful aid for the rest of us. £7, from 3lib.ukonline.co.uk.

Does it work on my handheld?

Please note that the products reviewed in this section are currently available only for the specified Symbian devices.

'UIQ' refers to Sony Ericsson P800 and P900 models, 'Series 60' refers to Nokia 3650, Nokia 6600, etc., and 'Nokia 9200 Series' refers to the 9210, 9210i and 9290 models.

Please check the relevant web sites for compatibility with your own device.

Also for Symbian...

The following programs reviewed in the Palm OS and Pocket PC software review sections are also available in Symbian versions:

RMR Task - page 36

RepliGo - page 37

EPOC Beds, Bucks, Herts User Group

For Psion users with Series 3/ Series 5/netpad/Revo/Siena/Symbian smartphones/Ericsson MC218

Phone: 07802 354759 (mobile) from 9am-10pm,
or 01234 851895 from 9am-6pm

Email: philiprutt@greasyfingers.demon.co.uk

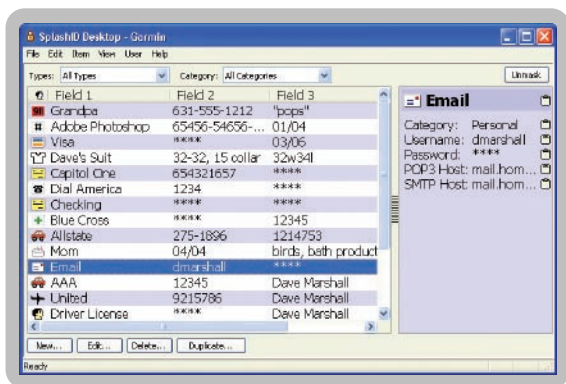
45 High Street, Kempston, Bedfordshire MK42 7BT, ENGLAND

SplashID

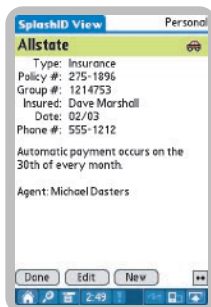
Secure Personal Identification Organizer
for PDAs and Smartphones



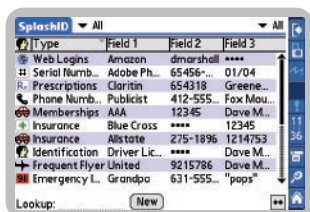
Keep your data
safe and secure with
Blowfish encryption



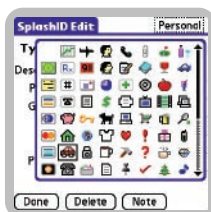
SplashID runs on both your Handheld and Desktop
computer with full 2-way synchronization



View item details,
with custom fields,
categories, notes, and icons



Customizable list view
supports both portrait
and landscape orientation



Assign individual icons
to each record for
quick visual reference

SplashID safely and securely stores all of your sensitive personal information including user names, passwords, credit cards, PINs and more. Information is stored in a secure, encrypted database and is quickly accessible on your PDA, Smartphone and desktop computer.

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Pocket PC



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Symbian
UIQ



Symbian
Series 60



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For PDA platforms:
- Psion (S3, S5, S7) - Pocket PC -
- Palm - Nokia Communicator -

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Group: My Accounts					My Accs	
Ac. Name	Description	Type	Debit	Credit		
1 Current	Bank current account	Bank	664.82	1,213.73		
2 Visa	Mastercard credit card	CIFCard	152.87			
3 MCard	Mastercard credit card	CIFCard		36.00		
4 Cash	Household cash	Cash	4,500.00			
5 Loan	Finance HP loan	Liability		2,383.50		
6 Savings	Building Soc savings	Asset		450.00		
7 Beave	Bank savings account	Bank		6,719.50		
8 Shares	Stocks and shares	Shares		752.18		
9 Other	Partner's account	Bank		436.34		
0 Club	Club working account	Bank				

Accounts					Add	
Ac. Name	Description	Type	Debit	Credit		
1 Current	Current	Bank	82.00			
2 VISA	VISA	CIFCard	256.00			
3 Savings	Savings Account	Bank		1234.00		

RMRBank READ VISA					Update	
Acc	Trn	Cat	D/D	Ref	Def	\$
08/05	Hire Car	Rvts				-56.67
08/06	Hotel	12/...				-123.45
08/06	Food					-12.35
08/06	Tolls	A1				-56.34
08/06	Flights	BR				-456.78
08/07	Book					-2.56
08/09	Gas					-34.34
08/09	Food					-23.00
						-2345.67

RMRBank READ VISA					Update	
Acc	Trn	Cat	D/D	Ref	Def	\$
08/05	Hire Car	Rvts				-56.67
08/06	Hotel	12/...				-123.45
08/06	Food					-12.35
08/06	Tolls	A1				-56.34
08/06	Flights	BR				-456.78
08/07	Book					-2.56
08/09	Gas					-34.34
08/09	Food					-23.00
						-2345.67



sales@rmrsoft.com
RMR Software

Producing Programs for PDAs since 1994



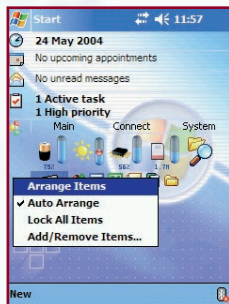
Pocket PC SOFTWARE



Some of the most interesting new software additions for your Pocket PC handheld or communicator...

Pocket PC power pack

The latest version of **Pocket Plus** bundles together a compelling selection of interface enhancements and handy utilities. Central to the collection is a capable Today screen plug-in that lets you launch programs and files from its unobtrusive tabbed interface, as well as displaying comprehensive system information such as battery status, free memory and storage card space, etc. Everything is very configurable, from rearranging icons on the screen to deciding which programs, files and tools to display, all with a minimum of fuss. The Today display has several alternative (and customisable) styles and colour schemes too, so a quick tap will bring up a fresh new look to ring the changes. Beyond the core Today screen, there's the almost obligatory 'Close' button to shut down applications rather than just send them into the background, and a 'fuel gauge' style battery meter that appears along the very top of the screen. There's also extra functionality for File Explorer, in the shape of a fast file zipping utility, storage card formatting and an improved

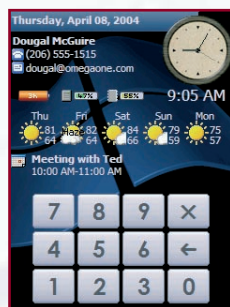


file properties display. Pocket Plus adds customisable repeating alarms too, and a set of enhancements for Pocket Internet Explorer, including a full-screen display and multiple windows. If you're looking for a single utility package to enhance your Pocket PC experience, Pocket Plus should be right at the top of your list. \$15, from www.spbsoftwarehouse.com.

Quicker passwords...

The built-in Pocket PC Password facility is rather lacking in flexibility, and forces you to tap the password into the on-screen keypad each time.

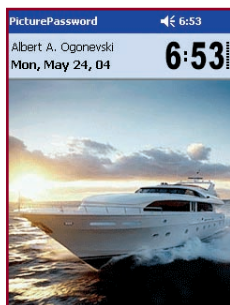
1-Pass attempts to simplify the process by letting you assign an alternative password that can be entered with one hand, via a sequence of keypresses using the four main application buttons. You can make the sequence as long or as short as you like, and configure the device lock to kick in after a pre-defined period of power off and/or absence of input. The attractive startup screen that shows when locked can be set to display any combination of a



clock, your email address, name and phone number, and your next appointment. It's a pity this configurability doesn't extend to the inclusion of a personalised message, such as "Reward offered if you find this device and phone this number", though the basic contact details will be enough for most. There's also a corporate version of the product, which forces a minimum password length and doesn't allow the security features to be disabled. \$15, from www.omegagone.com.

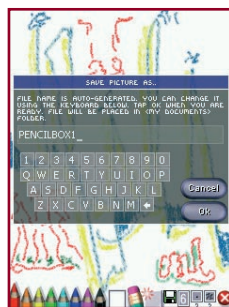
...Or picture passwords

Another alternative to the built-in Pocket PC password system, **Picture-Password** (also for Palm OS) uses the standard dialog for entering the usual 4-digit or 'strong alphanumeric' password options, but with a novel twist. When the device is first switched on with passwording enabled, you're presented with a picture on the screen, below a display of time, date, owner and contact information. Rather than entering a conventional password, you must tap on the picture at a pre-set spot of your choice. You can use your own photo if you wish, and set the required accuracy of your tap to suit either a stylus or finger. Sensibly, you're only allowed a single attempt to hit the right spot on your picture. If you get it wrong you're taken to the standard password screen, where you'll have to enter the full alphanumeric string. Novelty aside, a quick tap using PicturePassword is quicker than typing out a series of letters and numbers, and, given the 'one shot' configuration, should be secure enough for almost anyone. \$15, from www.softava.com.



Pocket pencil box

A new addition to the broad range of Pocket PC drawing programs (see our feature in the last issue), **Pencil Box Deluxe** does nothing more than is implied by the title, but does it rather

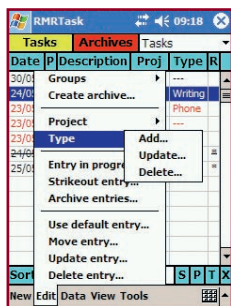


well. A completely icon-driven interface presents a row of options across the bottom of the screen for selection of pencil colour, an eraser, four pencil widths and four opacity settings to simulate the pressure applied to the drawing pencils. Each drawing file can contain up to six screenfuls of images, and there are 10 textured 'paper' types to choose from for each one, though there's otherwise very little configurability beyond changing pencil colours, and no fancy special effects. Despite the limited array of tools available, the program scores high marks for its simple way of working, the genuine feeling of using pencils on real paper, and its sheer fun value. Drawings are automatically saved into BMP format. \$12, from www.mentalmotions.com.

Power tasks

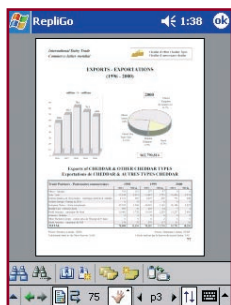
If you need a little more flexibility than the built-in Tasks can offer, but don't want to go overboard on complexity, **RMR Task** is worth a look. Tasks can be assigned categories for 'Project' and 'Type', and 10 priority settings rather than the usual three offered by Tasks. A quick tap on the corresponding heading in the tabular list view will then sort your task list in alphabetical order, with a second tap reversing the order. Items can be set to repeat, can have text notes attached, and the display distinguishes between current, overdue, completed and 'in progress' tasks, to give

a quick visual summary of where you stand. This first version has a few rough edges: the technicolour display is a bit garish, tapping on an entry doesn't take you into edit mode (requiring a menu selection instead), filter settings can't be saved for future use, project and type categories can't be added while in the data entry dialog, and the program feels a little sluggish in operation. RMR Task items don't have a desktop application where they can be edited, though they can be exported in plain text or CSV format, perhaps for use in a desktop spreadsheet. There's also an integral backup, restore and archiving facility, and a basic template system to speed up entry of commonly-used task types. \$20, from www.rmrsoft.com.



Better PDFs and more

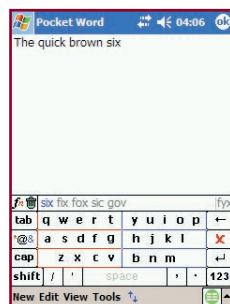
Bringing the Pocket PC version of this capable document viewing application (covered in more detail in our 'PDF files to go' feature in the last issue) into line with the latest Palm OS edition, **RepliGo 2.0** is a fairly major overhaul. Beyond the nicely-improved interface design on the handheld itself, there's a brand new version of the companion PC desktop application that's needed to convert virtually any desktop document format into pages that can be viewed (but not edited) on the small screen. Whether you're converting Microsoft Office docu-



ments, PDF files or complex graphics, **RepliGo** does an admirable job, though of course everything needs to be run through the desktop converter. Useful new features include a full text search facility, plus excellent support for annotations and bookmarking, hyperlinking and handling of 24-bit colour images. The new version will also support landscape mode in forthcoming Windows Mobile 2003 Second Edition devices. Highly recommended. \$30, from www.cerience.com.

Strange-but-fast keyboard

The latest entrant in the quest for super-fast text input, **TenGO** uses T9-style predictive input to simplify entry. The idea is that instead of having to tap accurately on each letter of the QWERTY

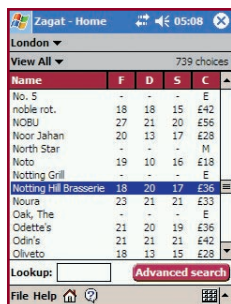


keyboard, the standard layout is instead divided into only six blocks of letters. By tapping on the right block rather than individual letters, the predictive input system is able to guess what word you're trying to create. On the plus side, by localising all your screen taps into the central area where the six blocks intersect, you can reduce finger movement to almost nothing when typing, which has a marked effect on input speed. Also, you won't need to be so accurate with your taps. On the downside, you need to be fully familiar with the QWERTY layout in order for the process to work, and you'll need to glance at TenGo's status screen just above the keyboard after completing each word, which shows all the alternatives when more than one exists for the current letter combination. With some perseverance you should be able to get up to a decent speed though, and there's good support for input of numerals

and special characters, and versions with French, German and Spanish dictionaries, as well as English. For words not already in TenGo's input dictionary, there's a clever and effective system of adding words on the fly, simply by dragging the stylus over each letter of the word as you enter it for the first time. \$20, from www.tengo.net.

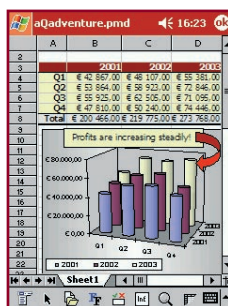
Restaurants to go

Zagat To Go for Palm OS has been a well-respected PDA-based restaurant guide for some years now. The new **Zagat To Go 2004** for both Pocket PC and Palm OS is better than ever, with more coverage of European locations, including London, Paris, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Madrid, Milan, Munich, Berlin, Brussels, Budapest, Lisbon, Istanbul, Hamburg, Geneva, Copenhagen, Dublin, Prague, Rome, Stockholm, Venice, Vienna, Warsaw, Tokyo, and Zürich, as well as fairly comprehensive coverage of major US cities. As always, the reviews are exceptionally informative, with ratings for food, decor, service and cost, full address and phone numbers for each location, with pricing, opening times and details of other notable features. An exceptionally flexible advanced search feature lets you filter out restaurants by any combination of cuisine, ratings, cost, features or location, to help find exactly that you want. The new guide also includes a nightlife guide for six selected cities, London included. Absolutely essential for serious restaurant goers. \$25, with free updates, from www.zagat.com.



Stellar spreadsheet

The first alternative to Pocket Excel, version 1 of **PlanMaker** is a handheld spreadsheet application like no other. From the same software house that brought us TextMaker, the high-powered Pocket Word replacement, PlanMaker incorporates a feature list that would look impressive for a desktop spreadsheet application, and on a PDA is nothing short of staggering. All the features most obviously missing from Pocket Excel are there: graphing, spell checking, templates, and so on. Even more impressive is the array of advanced features you'd probably *never* expect to see on a handheld, such as a full set of on-sheet drawing tools, goal seeking, conditional formatting, outlining and syntax highlighting. A little less ambitious but great to have, you'll find an autofill feature to fill in a series of numbers for you, style sheets, auto-formatting, SmartText, cell comments—the list goes on and on. In short, if you can do it on your desktop spreadsheet, there's a very good chance you can now do it on your Pocket PC too.



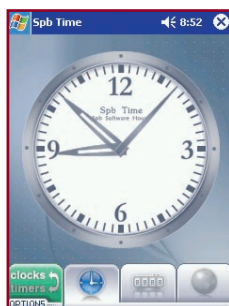
Equally important for power users, you can forget the frustration of having Pocket Excel lose even the most basic formatting when syncing with your desktop spreadsheets. PlanMaker does a great job of opening and saving files in Excel format with complex formatting intact, but can also be purchased with a companion Windows desktop application that uses PlanMaker's own native format, which should ensure 100% compatibility with even the most complex workbooks. As a desktop spreadsheet application in its own right, PlanMaker for the PC (and also

available for Linux) is a credible alternative to Excel, with full Excel compatibility. On the handheld, there's naturally something of a price to pay for all this sophistication. The sheer number of features requires the entire menu structure of PlanMaker to be nested (as with TextMaker), so it takes at least one extra screen tap to reach any menu item. There's also a speed hit, with the application taking noticeably longer to open, close and navigate than Pocket Excel—all quite understandable given the underlying power of this application, but worthy of consideration if you make little more than occasional use of PlanMaker's advanced features. Despite the plethora of menu options though, navigation is all sensibly laid out and will make Excel veterans feel quickly at home.

PlanMaker is exactly what power users have been waiting for, and, for those who rely heavily on their spreadsheets, may even be enough to make them switch platforms from Palm OS or Symbian devices, where such spreadsheeting power simply doesn't exist. \$50 for the handheld application only, or \$70 with bundled PC or Linux desktop version, from www.softmaker.de. Also available for now-discontinued HPC devices.

Time tools

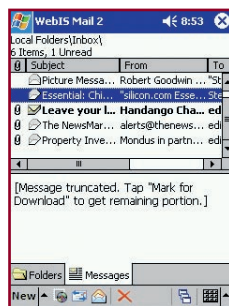
Most of us occasionally need a stopwatch or countdown timer, whether it's as a sports spectator or merely to boil an egg. **Spb Time** rolls both of these into a handy general-purpose set of clock-related utilities, complete with world clocks and an on-screen 'desk' clock to display while your Pocket PC is in its sync



cradle. Everything's beautifully presented and well thought out, with a tabbed interface to switch you between clock/calendar, world time display, stopwatches and countdown timers. You get a full-screen stopwatch with 1/1000th second resolution, plus separate screens for five countdown timers and five stopwatches, all with 0.1 second resolution and all nameable for identification. All can run simultaneously (and with Spb Time in the background, of course), and all have a multiple lap time facility, which produces a text file of results that can be exported on completion. Snoozable alarms can be set from within time's clock screen, with repeat intervals set for any combination of days, though not for specific dates. Although it would have been good to see more flexibility in alarm settings, including a summary display of all upcoming reminders, this still works well as a daily alarm clock. The fairly standard graphical world time display shows the current time and date in four locations around the world, with a day/night indicator to show which parts of the globe are currently in daylight or darkness. Overall, a good suite of related tools at a great price. \$10, from www.spbsoftwarehouse.com.

Alternative emailer

As a more powerful alternative to the built-in Inbox application, @Mail 1.0 (reviewed in issue 4) was an impressive first release. Being built upon Inbox's underlying CEMAPI



underpinnings, it was ultimately restricted by a number of Inbox's own limitations. This new version 2 has been renamed from @Mail to simply (Web)IS Mail, and has been rewritten from the ground up with a much

more extensive feature set. There's full IMAP4, SMTP and SOCKS support as well as the usual POP3, complete with SSL security to keep corporate customers happy.

There are still a few notable omissions, including rules for filtering incoming messages and direct editing of HTML messages on the handheld, but this is still a huge improvement on Inbox. To begin with, there's now lots of flexibility to specify exactly what messages are downloaded and when, including if and when messages received on the handheld are removed from the server. If you set Mail to check for messages automatically at prescribed intervals, you can also specify whether you're always notified of the

completed connection, or just when you've got new mail to read. Also, it can be set to try a different connection type if one fails. So, for instance, you can have it try an ActiveSync connection first to retrieve your messages, then drop back to a Bluetooth modem link if you're not currently cradled to your PC. As before, Mail's tree hierarchy works happily with a complex Outlook file structure, though if you're storing a lot of messages on card, things can slow down substantially. If you're unhappy with Inbox, Mail is the only other game in town, and though it's still not quite the last word in handheld email clients, it's nicely implemented and well worth a look. \$25, from www.webis.net.

Does it work on my handheld?

Please note that most of the products reviewed in this section are available in both Pocket PC 2002 and 2003 (Windows Mobile 2003) versions, but please check the relevant web sites for compatibility with your own device.

Also for Pocket PC...

The following programs reviewed in the Palm OS and Symbian software review sections are also available in Pocket PC versions:

PhatNotes - page 21
NetFront - page 27
SplashID - page 31



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A CLOSER LOOK

REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS

Star Ratings:

★★★★★	Excellent
★★★★☆	Good
★★★☆☆	Average
★★☆☆☆	Fair
★☆☆☆☆	Poor
☆☆☆☆☆	Dismal

Interpreting reviews

Quality: the Quality star rating reflects how well the product works, whether it includes all the features you'd expect, whether the interface is consistent and easy to use, and in data-based products also reflects the quality of the information contained in the program.

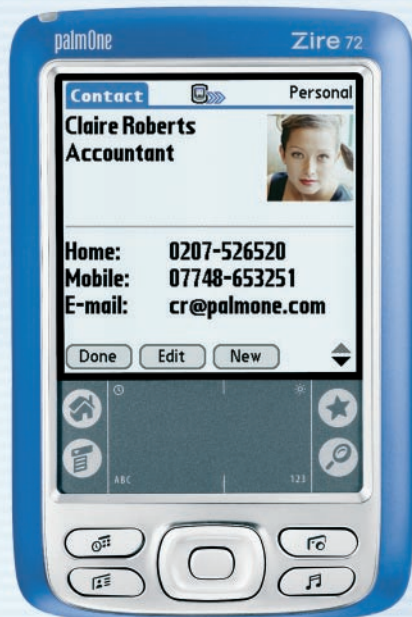
Value: the Value star rating reflects the value for money of the product, taken within the context of what the product does.

palmOne Zire 72	43
palmOne Zire 31	45
HP iPAQ 4350	46
RIM BlackBerry	47

Palm Zire 72

Having graduated beyond their infancy of early-adopter appeal, handheld computers now have to offer a certain degree of style and panache in order to draw the largest possible audience. In that respect, and as part of palmOne's consumer-oriented Zire range (as opposed to the more business-oriented Tungsten range), the Zire 72 is a worthy replacement for its Zire 71 predecessor.

Designed with a definite slant towards the younger set, the 72's satin-finish deep blue and silver colour scheme is undeniably handsome, though being of entirely plastic construction it lacks the more business-like solidity of the Tungsten T models. The stylish design has cunningly been extended to the Zire's built-in software as well as the externals, with a pre-loaded picture backdrop for the PIM suite's 'Today' summary screen and a graduated colour backdrop



for the main Applications launcher—all designed to show off the 72's excellent 320x320 TFT colour screen.

Though not truly outstanding from the viewpoint of specifications, the Zire 72 is a good all-rounder, designed to give the average user all they need. Almost everything is improved from the original Zire 71, starting with a 1.2 Megapixel camera with a maximum resolution of 1280x960 pixels in place of the old 640x480. The camera design has been changed to get rid of the old slider mechanism used to protect the Zire 71's lens. Though this initially seems like a good plan, the lens is now more prone to damage, even though it's recessed by a few millimetres. Unlikely to be a major issue, but we'd have liked to see a simple sliding lens cover mechanism, just in case.

The camera software incorporates a 2x digital zoom and a video 'movie' mode, which operates at a maximum resolution of 320x240, complete with sound recorded from the microphone situated adjacent to the camera. Movie footage must be saved to SD storage card (in MPEG format), where it takes a maximum of around 4MB per minute of recording. Movie quality is quite acceptable for fun use, and the microphone is sensitive enough to pick up ambient sounds from a considerable distance.

With no flash facility, the camera is naturally limited to shots taken in reasonable ambient lighting, preferably outdoors, as low-light indoor shots tend to appear very grainy—a common drawback of low-end digital cameras. The same limitations apply when the camera is used in 'movie' mode. Multimedia is most definitely central to the Zire 72's operation, with two of the four hardware buttons on the front of the device pre-mapped to the camera and MP3 player.

Overall performance has had a major boost, with a speedy 312MHz ARM processor that really flies under Palm OS 5.2.2. The 71's quirky 'joystick' navigation control

has thankfully been ditched in favour of a conventional five-way navigator pad, and memory has been expanded to 32MB, though only 24MB or so is available for running applications—adequate, but not especially generous by today's standards.

Bluetooth makes its first appearance in the Zire range here, an immensely important addition to all but the most basic PDAs in these days of Bluetooth-equipped mobile phones. To maximise the value of the mobile phone connection, there's a new Messages application built into the 72, to handle SMS text and MMS messaging. This works exceptionally well, with an editable phrase list to speed up the process of text messaging, and an MMS editor that incorporates a decent set of drawing tools and image import from either the Zire's Media application (a built-in viewer for both still and video images) or straight from the camera.

The Zire ships with a brand new version (3.5) of palmOne's competent Web Pro browser in ROM, with a handy new 'Mini View' which shrinks pages to fit the screen, and an equally useful text search facility. Bundled software includes the Documents To Go Standard Edition Office suite and a tweaked version of the VersaMail email client, from which you can browse and attach pictures and video files from within the Media application.

There's been a sterling effort to simplify things for beginners as far as possible on this new device, with the now-standard 'Quick Tour' on-screen tutorial and a new Bluetooth setup Wizard, which walks you through the entire configuration process for phone, PC and LAN setups. Now apparently standard on all palmOne handhelds, the Zire 72 incorporates the Calendar, Contacts, Memos and Tasks applications first seen in the Tungsten T3's PIM suite, together with palmOne's own Microsoft Outlook conduit, all designed for improved compatibility with this desktop standard.



On the subject of standards, the Zire 72 has a miniature USB socket for the supplied HotSync cable and a separate coaxial socket for mains power (in common with the Zire 31) rather than the Palm Universal Connector, which is looking less and less 'Universal' with each new model.

Finished off with a sturdy and natty 'purse' style case, the Zire 72 is a well-rounded package in terms of both hardware and software. If you're looking for multimedia capabilities, the Zire 72 is a great choice.

Palm Zire 72

From: All major handheld dealers

Contact: www.palmone.com

Price: RRP £229 inc. VAT

Quality: ★★★★★☆

Value: ★★★★★☆

Palm Zire 31

In the last issue we examined palmOne's monochrome-screened Zire 21, concluding that although unquestionably a bargain, it's hard to get enthusiastic about a dim, non-backlit screen, no matter how low the price. It would seem that others felt the same way, as only a few months later out comes the Zire 31, essentially a colour-screened version of its predecessor.

All in all, it seems that palmOne (the name for Palm's hardware division these days) was listening intently to comments and criticisms, and has made other more subtle (but nonetheless worthwhile) improvements this time around. Although the Zire 31's all-plastic casing is almost identical to the Zire 21, it has a smart new blue and white livery in place of the 21's rather sanitised-looking grey and white. USB and power sockets are down the left hand side, protected by a flexible cover to keep out dust and grime. The blue finish is nicely

complemented by a translucent blue flip cover to protect the screen.

Aesthetics aside, the 21's separate up/down scroll buttons have been replaced by a much more serviceable five-way navigator control. Even more significant, there's now an SD expansion slot as well as a headphone socket for MP3 playback. There's been a major re-fit inside too, with memory now doubled up to 16MB, and a faster 200MHz processor in place of the old 126Mhz.

To help out new users, undoubtedly the Zire 31's target market, here's also a new 'Quick Tour' application, as seen on other recent palmOne models, which gives a useful overview without resorting to the (CD-based) manual. There's understandably no real business software bundled, but it does include all the new Outlook-friendly PIM applications in ROM, together with RealOne Player for MP3 files, and the standard Palm Photos and World Clock.

On the downside, the 160x160 pixel STN colour screen still has an unusually small 46mm square active area, and looks decidedly blocky against the rest of the palmOne range (apart from the Treo 600). Still, at only £130 it would be churlish to criticise this too harshly.

Not only is this the lowest-priced colour PDA ever, it's also stylish, capable, compatible and expandable. With all that going for it, this is a welcome addition to the PDA world, and one that will undoubtedly encourage many new users into the fold.



Palm Zire 31

From: All major handheld dealers

Contact: www.palmone.com

Price: RRP £129 inc. VAT

Quality: ★★★★★☆

Value: ★★★★★★

HP iPAQ h4350

Though not officially released in the UK, the iPAQ 4350 has generated considerable interest (and demand) here, primarily due to its built-in thumb keyboard. Although slip-on keyboards are available for other models in the iPAQ range, the 4350 is the only device to have one fully integrated.

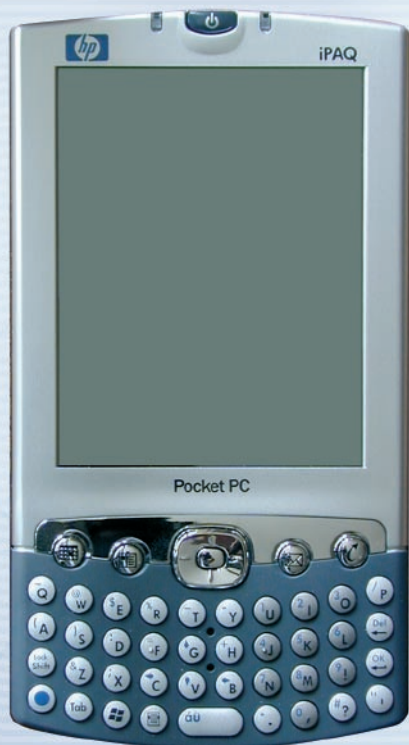
As far as tiny keyboards go, the 4350's is one of the best. With a span of around 68mm (2.7") it's bigger than most, and the raised and domed keys have a quality feel, with the keytops clearly marked. The legends on the keys can be configured to illuminate with a bright backlight when pressed, making it easy to use the keyboard in low lighting or complete darkness. The layout of the 39 keys is logical, with an

embedded numeric pad, cursor functions and special characters accessed via a dedicated blue 'option' key. There's also a 'Windows' key to invoke the Start menu, and another to pop up contextual menus. The only downside with the keyboard is that it's designed for the US market, with the '£' sign accessible only via the standard pop-up keyboard, Transcriber, Block Recogniser or Letter Recogniser.

The keyboard will likely be the pivotal point in anyone's decision to buy a 4350, especially as it is otherwise functionally similar to the HP 4150 (reviewed in the last issue), with both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi wireless LAN capabilities. Internal memory is 57MB, with just under 3MB of non-volatile flash memory storage and a 400MHz PXA255 processor, all identical to the HP 4150. In fact, the screens of the two devices are identical in size too, making the keyboard of the 4350 versus the smaller size and ultra light weight of the 4150 left as the only significant difference.

At 170g (6oz) the 4350 is 30% heavier than the 4150, and at 138mm (5.4") is rather long by the latest compact PDA standards.

The street price of the 4150 has dropped enormously since its release only a short number of months ago, making the 4350 around £70 more expensive at current UK prices. If you have a penchant for thumb keyboards (and the dexterity to match) then the 4350 is well worthy of consideration, if you can find a dealer in your country that stocks it.



HP iPAQ h4350

From: UK import only, via selected dealers

Contact: www.clove.co.uk

Price: Around £340 inc. VAT

Quality:



Value:



RIM BlackBerry

Having already made a significant impact in the US market, the RIM BlackBerry range is beginning to become available elsewhere, including here in the UK. So, what exactly *are* these devices, what can they do, and more importantly, are they a serious alternative to Palm OS, Pocket PC and Symbian PDAs?

Though the current range of BlackBerry devices incorporates a variety of screen sizes and technologies ranging from 100x160 monochrome to 240x240 backlit colour, they're all based primarily around the concept of 'push' email on a compact handheld with a good-sized thumb keyboard and exceptional battery life. With such a simple basic premise, the BlackBerrys have evolved without touch screens, with navigation achieved solely by a jog dial at the top right, with a press-in action on the dial to execute a highlighted command,



and a 'Back' button beneath it to step back from the current dialog or screen.

Designed first-and-foremost for corporate clients rather than end-user consumers, 'push' email allows incoming messages to be routed directly to the device (via BlackBerry's own 'Enterprise Servers'), almost in real time, rather than having to dial in and collect messages, as would be required when using a PDA with a traditional POP3 email account. Outgoing messages work in a similar fashion, relaying each email immediately via the BlackBerry's high-speed GPRS connection. For corporate users, third party software solutions can also take advantage of the 'always on' nature of the BlackBerry's messaging system to provide instant access to intranet database applications, etc.

The ability to handle emails in this way takes a degree of effort away from the user and helps to ensure that important messages are received in a timely fashion—a major boon for non-technical users who can't be relied upon to configure too much for themselves. Most modern PDA-based email packages provide for an automated send/receive connection at regular, pre-set intervals, be it using an all-in-one smartphone or a separate PDA and Bluetooth phone, and for most of us the end result is as close to true push email as we need to get. The BlackBerry method of handling messages is certainly straightforward though, and the same built-in messaging application is used for handling SMS text messages with similar ease. In fact, push email makes emailing virtually identical to SMS messaging from a user's standpoint, with a quick 'beep' to signal the arrival of a new message from either source.

Probably more significant and compelling for business customers than push email, the built-in Outlook-compatible PIM suite can synchronize calendar events with a corporate server *in real time*, immensely powerful for workgroup collaboration.

Although the built-in software doesn't include anything resembling an Office suite, email attachments in all common formats can be accessed if you're using an Enterprise email account on the BlackBerry. This works via a pre-processing system that converts the files into a simple text format on the BlackBerry servers first, transferring them to the handheld on demand.

To complete the connectivity suite (which doesn't include MMS messaging, by the way), there's a WAP browser, perfect for grabbing important news snippets and business updates—again aimed at the traveller with a need to keep abreast of stock updates and the like. The browser also handles web pages, though the lack of a left-right scrolling option means that pages are always formatted to fit a single screen width, which can sometimes lead to clumsy page renderings.

Software on the BlackBerry is all largely text-based, with minimal graphics. Aside from the PIM suite, there's an alarm clock, basic calculator with Imperial/Metric unit conversions, and a 'Breakout' style game. It's all visually very crude by current PDA standards, though perfectly functional. Third party software also exists for the (Java-based) BlackBerry range (see www.handango.com for a good selection).

With messaging so central to the BlackBerry's existence, this is most certainly not a device that's been optimised for running third party software. Though operation of the built-in applications is all simple and logical, navigation via the two basic controls can be agonisingly awkward at times, making complex add-on software hard to implement.

A point that's easy to overlook, the latest BlackBerry models also include full tri-band GSM phone functionality, via an integral microphone and speaker. Depending upon the tariff chosen with each purchase, this feature may be 'locked out', normally in cases where the unit comes with a flat-rate

messaging tariff that allows for unlimited email, SMS and WAP usage for a fixed monthly fee.

If almost all of your PDA usage centres around email, text messaging and WAP, the BlackBerry range is certainly worthy of consideration, particularly if you can get a good deal on the aforementioned flat-rate tariffs. The unusually wide thumb keyboard lends itself well to large amounts of typing, and the BlackBerry devices represent a simple, stable platform from which to conduct large amounts of messaging. If the 'corporate' calendaring and database access features are important to you, a BlackBerry may be the perfect solution. Note, however, that the BlackBerry system (i.e. the 'always on' connection via the BlackBerry servers) will soon be made available for other handheld platforms.

Though usable for other PDA-related tasks, it's hard to recommend the BlackBerry range on that basis alone. Almost everything beyond basic messaging feels very much like a bolted-on feature, and the ever-present issue of navigation tends to pervade anything more involved than these core functions. To criticise the BlackBerrys for not being the best all-round PDAs would be to detract from their real strength. A huge number of PDA users really just need a means to handle email while on the road, and from this perspective the BlackBerry works simply, elegantly and reliably.

For more details on the many possible combinations of models and tariffs, together with details of integration with Microsoft Exchange and Lotus Domino servers, see the web site given below.

RIM BlackBerry

From: Research In Motion Ltd

Contact: www.blackberry.com/uk

Price: Check web site for providers/tariffs

On the road with your PDA

PDA-based navigation solutions have evolved in leaps and bounds in recent months. In this introduction to a short new series we look at the ups and downs of using a handheld computer and GPS satellite receiver

Navigation solutions for handheld computers have come a long way since the days when the only option was to lash together a standalone GPS receiver and some simple PDA-based mapping software via a home-made RS232 serial cable. Once hooked up, the only guidance you got while travelling was a moving cross-hair cursor showing your current position on the road.

A new breed

Nowadays, it's possible to run a PDA with a full-colour 3D display showing your current position, complete with clear, spoken directions (in a form such as "After 300 yards, go right on the roundabout, third exit, then enter motorway"). Far from having to connect everything via a rat's nest of cables, a suitably-equipped handheld can receive its satellite-based GPS positioning information via a wireless Bluetooth unit little bigger than a matchbox, tucked neatly against the car window.

So, does this all piece together into a fool-proof navigation system that gets you from A to B perfectly every time? After many thousands of miles travelling with a variety

of current systems, the answer is sadly no, but utopia is in sight, and the best of the current systems are certainly good enough to make them worth purchasing, particularly for anyone who spends a lot of time driving to new destinations.

Product landslide

It seems that the number of new navigation-related products appearing on the market has increased exponentially over the past six months or so. From a variety of manufacturers we now have PDAs with integral GPS receivers (and often software) and a range of wired GPS units and 'jackets' that slip over your PDA, to Bluetooth receivers and software supplied both on CD and expansion cards. Add this to the latest standalone units that require no PDA, and the array of solutions becomes truly bewildering.

Down to earth

Regardless of the solution you choose, it's important to be aware of the inherent limitations, at least with all the packages we've tried to date. All navigation systems are only as effective as the map data they

contain, and in our tests this has proven to be the source of the vast majority of the navigation errors we've suffered.

All of the latest navigation software we've used has incorporated sufficient map detail to include almost every tiny road, lane and lay-by en route. Problems usually stem instead from either incorrect labelling of roads and places in the software or, more often, the maps' inability to distinguish the difference between minor roads of varying widths. Bear in mind that the navigation software itself simply uses brute force processing power to look at all the alternative routes between the start and end points of your journey, taking into account estimated differences in road speeds on everything between a multi-lane highway and a narrow country lane. Because of the limited size of the PDA-based map dataset, most navigation systems don't contain

enough information to know the difference between a *fairly* narrow (but passable) minor road and one that's little more than a dirt track. If using a 'conventional', paper-based map here in the UK, most distinguish minor ('B') roads as being either above 4m or below 4m in width. With most PDA-based solutions containing no such distinction, rural journeys can sometimes include a hair-raising trek down some all-but impassable roads.

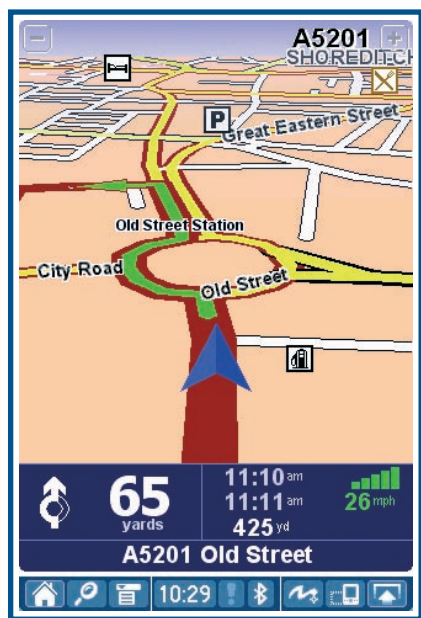
Other problems we've encountered involve incorrect labelling of postcodes (leading to a plausible-but-wrong destination 20 miles from the correct one), a police-only motorway entrance incorrectly shown as a valid roadway (leading to a 50-mile detour), and software telling us to go the wrong way around a roundabout, directly into the oncoming (one-way) traffic.

Get out the maps...

So, until such time that mapping data becomes sufficiently detailed to incorporate every tiny nuance of road detail (thankfully inevitable as large-capacity storage cards become cheaper and more capacious), it's vital not to simply follow instructions without a little consideration, though even this is of course no guarantee of a trouble-free route. Ultimately, we've found it essential to keep a printed map book to hand at all times, particularly when the journey is likely to involve any departure from major road networks.

Big benefits

On the plus side, on at least 80-90% of journeys we've generally been given almost faultless routes, with timely directions on a turn-by-turn basis, and the software has even estimated our arrival time to within an impressive margin, even on long journeys. Equally impressive, accidental wrong turns and forced detours are normally handled with aplomb, with a modified route being



TomTom Navigator—a sophisticated 3D navigation package running under Palm OS

calculated by the software in a matter of seconds.

So, although it's important to approach handheld navigation with realistic expectations, you can be sure that it's a whole lot better than stopping at regular intervals to consult a map or written directions.

It's also much safer than trying to look out for road signs and street names while negotiating heavy traffic.

In the next issue, we'll explain the various hardware and software options available, and offer some advice on how to set them up in your car. We'll then look in more detail at some of the best current solutions for Palm OS, Pocket PC and Symbian handhelds, and examine how they compare on a variety of journey types.

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Revo	8MB	£45	£95	RAM SSD	512K		£40
Revo Plus	16MB	£65	£140		1MB		£75
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Series 5mx	16MB	£85	£185		64MB	£10	£25
Series 7	16MB	£175	£325		128MB	£15	£40
Series 7 netBook	32MB	£225	£395	Other sizes		£phone	£phone
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PsilWin + cables	3a (v1.0)		£40	Money	SSD		£15
	3c/mx/5 (v2.2)	£10	£35	Toolkit 1 (or 2)	SSD		£20
Psion IR Travel Modem	3c/mx/5	£10	£45	Others			£phone
PC Card Modem Adaptor	3a/3c/mx/5	£15	£45				
Dacom Gold Card 34k	3a/c/mx/5		£15	SOFTWARE - Series 5mx		We Buy	We Sell
Dacom Gold Card 56k	3a/c/mx/5		£30	5 Pack (games)	disk	£2	£10
AC adaptor	5/5mx		£10	Bridge	CD	£15	£35
Leather case			£5-20	Chess	CD	£10	£30
Wide range of manuals			£10	Money	CD	£10	£35
Cyclone External Floppy	3c/mx/5	£30	£75	Route Planner	CD	£10	£30
				Street Planner	CD	£10	£30

Non-Psion handhelds

PALM		We Buy	We Sell	SONY (PALM OS)		We Buy	We Sell
Palm m105		£15	£40	Sony CLIE PEG-TJ35		£50	£105
Palm m505		£30	£75	Sony CLIE PEG-TJ37		£85	£175
Palm m515		£30	£85	Sony CLIE PEG-TH55		£110	£230
Palm Tungsten E		£50	£110	Sony CLIE UX50		£185	£290
Palm Tungsten C		£80	£165				
Palm Tungsten TJ2		£80	£165	POCKET PC			
Palm Tungsten TJ3		£105	£205	HP Jornada 720		£110	£225
				HP Jornada 560		£70	£160
				HP Jornada 568		£60	£130
				HP Jornada 565		£55	£120
				Toshiba e570		£50	£105
				Toshiba e740		£85	£175
POCKET PC							
iPAQ 1940		£75	£160				
iPAQ 2210		£95	£195				
iPAQ 4150		£140	£245				
iPAQ 5550		£235	£340				

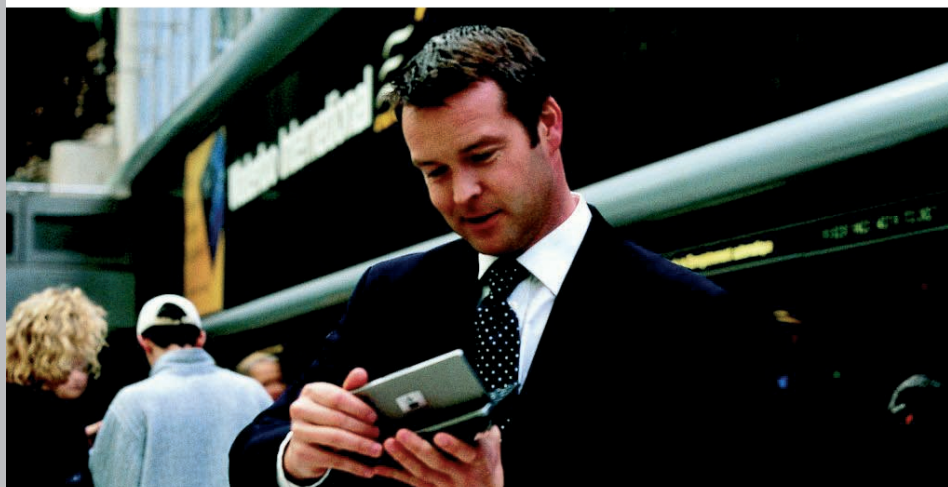
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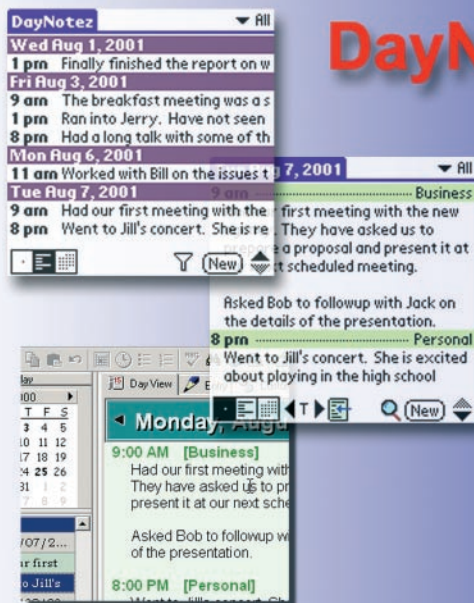
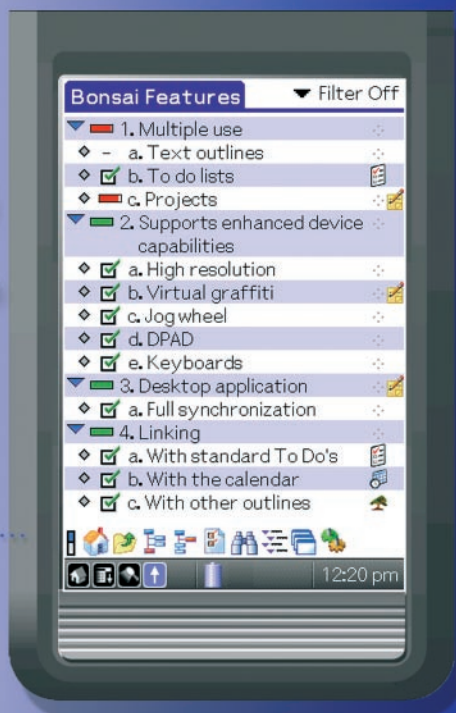
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The ins and outs of installing software

Getting software successfully installed to and removed from your handheld is sometimes more complex than you might imagine. We explain how the process works and offer a little guidance...

With handhelds becoming ever more sophisticated, you'd expect the process of installing, removing and otherwise managing add-on software to be simple and straightforward. In reality, there are a surprising number of potential pitfalls, particularly when it comes to deleting programs that you no longer require.

Depending largely on whether you're using Palm OS, Symbian or Pocket PC, installing software can be as simple as downloading and then double-tapping on a tiny installation file only a few tens of kilobytes in size, or as involved as downloading a full-blown '.exe' file for your PC that needs to be unzipped and run on the desktop before transferring dozens (or even hundreds) of individual files onto your handheld.

If you plan to purchase and keep the software you've downloaded then the process stops there, of course. However, with almost everything now available in 'try before you buy' evaluation versions, most of us have quite a turnover in programs that we've downloaded, tried, decided not

to keep, and subsequently deleted. As with installation, the deletion process varies enormously between handheld platforms, but the end result is that many 'deleted' programs still leave behind spurious files, registry and preferences entries and other detritus. In most cases this represents no more than perhaps a few tens or hundreds of kilobytes of wasted space, but in others it can cause more sinister behaviour. Over the next few pages, we'll look at the problems you're most likely to encounter with each major platform, and how best to perform the housekeeping necessary to minimise troubles and generally keep your files in good order.

Palm OS: software installation

Of the principal operating systems used for modern PDAs, Palm OS has by far the simplest filing system. In fact, many would argue that there's really no filing system at all, as all files in the internal memory of Palm OS handhelds appear lumped together into the one space, with no concept of a folder (directory) structure.

Installing software on Palm OS handhelds normally involves downloading a single zip file (or 'sit' file if you're using an Apple Macintosh). Once unzipped, you'll generally find one or more files with names ending in '.prc', and maybe some ending in '.pdb'. If there's a file in there entitled 'readme.txt' or something similar, be sure to examine that first, as it may contain important instructions on which files you need to install for your particular handheld model. If no such instructions exist, or if the download is merely a single '.prc' file, it's prudent to check on the developer's web site to confirm that the software is fully compatible with your PDA model before proceeding with installation.

As far as the installation itself is concerned, it's just a matter of double-clicking on the relevant files, or dragging them to the appropriate 'Quick Install' or 'Send to handheld' icon that was installed on your PC or Macintosh desktop with the Palm Desktop software.

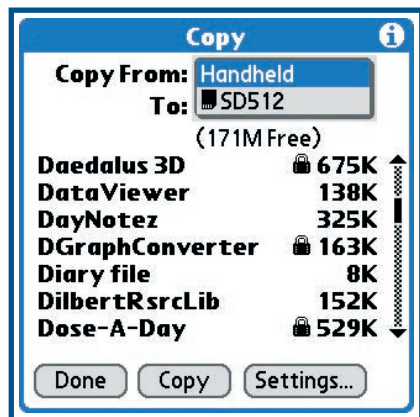
Once you've performed a HotSync to install the file(s), you should have immediate access to your new software via its own icon on the Palm OS Applications screen.

A small number of Palm OS applications are supplied as a zipped '.exe.' file that must be run from your PC rather than installed straight to the PDA. This is most often done when the program needs to install a companion desktop application or conduit in addition to the Palm application. In these cases the PC installation will normally guide you through the entire process, preparing all the necessary Palm installation files before prompting you to HotSync and complete the process. If you're running an Apple Macintosh there may be a separate Mac installation file, so check the developer's web site. If not, ask the developer to provide a simple, '.prc' version of the application. If they can't (or won't) supply this, your only recourse is

to use the standard PC-based installer via Virtual PC on your Mac.

Palm OS: storage cards

If you wish to move your newly-installed software from internal memory to a storage card, this is normally possible, though you should skim through the program's documentation to check that it's not required to remain in internal memory at all times. If an application contains a number of 'support' files aside from the main '.prc' program file, this will often involve moving only the main program file to card. Palm OS support for storage cards is something of a kludge at present, so if an application is stored onto card, when you tap on its icon the operating system simply copies a clone of the file into internal memory, runs the program from there, then automatically deletes the RAM-based copy again when you've finished. For that reason, you must have at least enough free internal RAM memory on your handheld to hold a copy of your largest card-based application, plus enough extra to run the operating system, of course.



Transferring installed files to storage card can be a tedious process under Palm OS

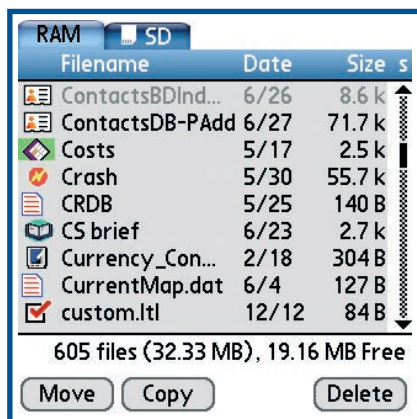
Moving applications from internal memory to card from the built-in Applications screen involves using the Copy command to put a duplicate of the desired program file onto card. Then, once this is done, it's necessary to delete the original file from memory, or else you'll be left with copies in *both* internal memory and storage card. To make the process even more inconvenient, all your card-based applications are presented in a single category that you can't change. A much easier way to handle the copying and storage of applications on memory cards is to use a third party launcher application, such as Launcher X (www.launcherx.com) or ZLauncher (www.zztechs.com). These make it a simple drag-and-drop exercise to move items, and allow you to continue to use categories as though the programs were in internal memory.

The standard installation process prompts you with the option to install directly to card from the outset, and many modern applications allow their data files and other support files to be stored on a card. Check the program's documentation on what's possible, and exactly where the files should be stored. Unlike the internal memory of Palm OS devices, storage cards use the standard 'FAT' filing system, with Palm OS's 'VFS' scheme requiring everything to be located in a specific folder. Most Palm OS devices don't come with a file manager application as standard, but most launchers (see above) include one. Otherwise, the freeware FileZ (www.nosleep.net) does a good job, and there are at least a dozen others available from the usual Palm software download sites.

Palm OS: deinstallation

So much for installing software to Palm OS devices—a largely straightforward process, apart from the caveats of what can be installed to storage cards and how.

When it comes to removing software, things are generally very easy too, though deleted programs can leave behind rubbish when they go, as we'll explain. In a nutshell, when you install a program, the only files that are put onto your device are usually the same ones (the '.prc' and '.pdb' files) that you saw at the installation stage, which appear on the handheld with exactly the same names. When you remove the software, these files should all disappear. Look out for *data* files though, which should get deleted when their parent application is removed, but occasionally don't. For example, if you installed a spreadsheet application, all the worksheets that you created while using the program will appear as separate files. Sometimes their file names will be virtually identical to the names you saved them under, but sometimes they'll be prefixed with one or more letters that identify them as belonging to that program—you'll have to scan through your file list on the handheld to check. To make things easier, some file manager applications, such as FileMan (www.bitsnbolts.com), show icons next to each file to indicate which program they belong to—a major help.



File managers such as FileMan help to ease the process of locating files for deletion

Even when you've removed all the obvious program and data files to free up the space taken by unwanted programs, they may well leave something behind in your *Saved Preferences* and *Unsaved Preferences* files, equivalent to the *Registry* that you'll find in Windows PCs and Pocket PC handhelds. Every program added to your Palm OS PDA will stash away several bytes of data into one or both of these files. The problem is that many programs don't properly identify some of these preferences as being created by (and thus belonging to) them. Hence, they are sometimes left behind when the program is removed.

Although there are a few utilities that allow you to access and edit the two preferences files (including the aforementioned FileZ), unless you know exactly what you're doing, this can be a recipe for disaster, as arbitrary removal of the wrong items can cause instability, hard resets and possible loss of all your data.

Palm OS: the bottom line

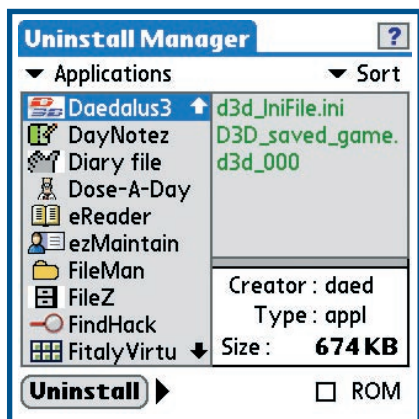
Although left-behind program files and unnecessarily bloated preferences files can potentially cause a measurable perform-

ance hit and take up unnecessary space on your handheld, the problem usually isn't serious enough to warrant spending a lot of time tracking down every errant item. A few utilities are available to help manage the removal of unwanted items, by far the best of which is Uninstall Manager (www.northglide.com). Although it contains a number of advanced features that'll require you to study its extensive documentation to make full use of, at its simplest it will sit in the background (under Palm OS 5 and above) and monitor all your new software installations. By 'watching' what gets installed, including additions to your preferences files, it's able to present you with a list of items for removal with each program, normally picking up and deleting every item of detritus for you—even items that have been moved to storage card.

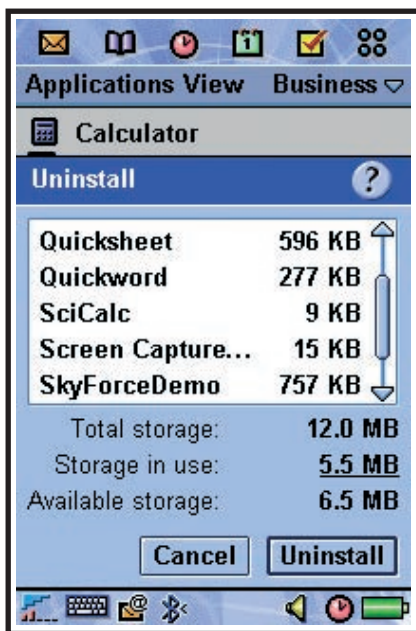
Symbian: installation

Ever since 1996, installing Psion and Symbian applications has been made trivial by the use of a dedicated installation file format, 'SIS'. Files and databases, packaged by the developer into a single '.sis' file, can be installed into a standard FAT filing system in either internal memory or flash expansion disk, into a named application folder within \System\Apps. The Symbian installer asks for any relevant preferences, such as destination, language, etc. Once installed, applications can be loaded from either location into RAM without restriction. In the event of installation problems, note that applications can always also be installed directly on the handheld itself by downloading the appropriate '.sis' file, either from desktop to handheld or Over The Air (OTA) from a developer web site.

UIQ users should be aware of a bug in the operating system on all but the newest devices. After installing or deinstalling a program, UIQ sometimes gets confused and all your application icons disappear. It's



Uninstall Manager for Palm OS makes light work of managing your software deletions



On Symbian devices, deinstalling software is as painless as installing it

purely cosmetic, and either removing and re-inserting your storage card, using SMan's (www.renegade.w3xs.com/droll.htm) 'Fix Applist' function or restarting the phone will restore your icons.

Symbian: deinstallation

Removing an application is as easy as using 'Control panel | Install/Remove'. The operating system uses information from the original '.sis' file to know which files to delete, though as with Palm OS there may be extra documents and preference or registration files left over. The latter can usually be found in \System\ Apps\[application name] on your device's internal disk. UIQ users will need to use a file manager such as that in SMan to track down any such detritus.

Pocket PC: installation

In some ways the Pocket PC installation process is easier than for other handheld platforms, as it almost invariably works from a PC '.exe.' file that guides you through every step of the process, including the issue of confirming that the proposed installation is compatible with your particular handheld model. On the other hand, even the simplest utility program will invariably involve a download of megabytes rather than kilobytes, and some installation files are so large that they become problematic to download without a high-speed Internet connection.

Assuming that you're able to download the required installation file to your PC, there's generally little to report during the installation process itself. As with Symbian devices, the Pocket PC operating system will happily install software directly to storage cards, or to internal flash ROM such as the iPAQ File Store (or similar), subject to available space.

The installation process gives no real indication of what's going to be installed where, and indeed major programs can install many tens (or even hundreds) of files into a variety of locations on your device. Even when applications are installed to storage card, certain files will inevitably be placed into internal memory, so don't be surprised to find an assortment of new files in unexpected places.

On examining your Pocket PC after a software installation, you may find that a few liberties have been taken without your consent. Most common is that the program has been added to your Start Menu. It's normally possible to reverse this by going to the Menus option in the Settings screen (itself accessed from the Start Menu), and un-checking the required item. If you find that you're not able to do this, or that the program name mysteriously appears *twice*, go into File Explorer and look under My

Device\Windows\Start Menu and remove the item from there. Don't worry that you're removing the program itself—this is in fact a program *shortcut*, merely a pointer to the actual application.

Your new program may also have added its own file type as an option in the 'New' menu that appears at the bottom left of the screen. If you want to remove it from the list, go back to the Menus item from the Settings screen and select the 'New Menu' tab at the bottom, from where you can uncheck any of the items.

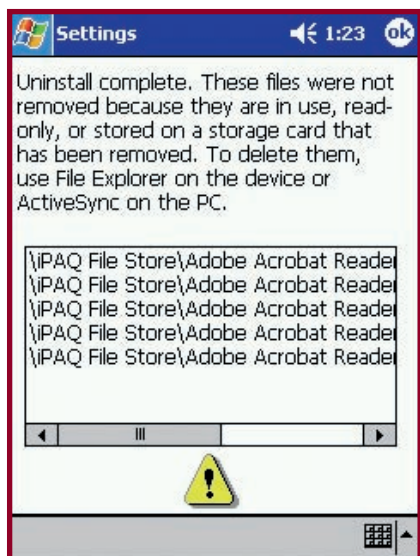
Pocket PC: deinstallation

In principle, the 'Remove Programs' option under the System tab of the Settings screen is your simple route to remove any programs that are no longer needed. In practice, this sometimes fails to clean things up completely, or brings up intractable error messages in the process. One of the most common glitches is that it brings

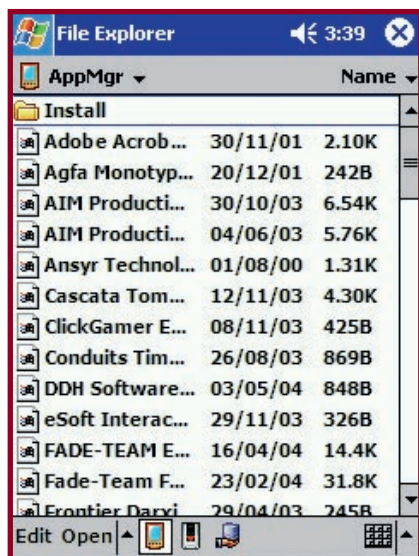
up a dialog stating that certain elements could not be removed, which is almost always the case when applications are installed to flash ROM. If so, note them all down on a piece of paper, then go into File Explorer and delete them manually. Quite often you'll get an 'Access denied' message until you perform a soft reset to re-initialise the system. It's not uncommon to have to perform two or more reset-and-delete operations before you've finally removed all the files.

As with other handhelds, you may need to search manually for related data files that you created before removing the program. Because Pocket PCs use a familiar directory structure very similar to Windows itself, you shouldn't have too much trouble tracking down items for deletion. Look in My Documents and any sub-folders within it (in both internal memory and storage card).

Beyond the obvious, Pocket PC installations can leave behind an untidy mass of



Don't panic if you get a message like this—just remove the files using File Explorer



Use File Explorer to track down old files that are no longer needed

files, preferences and assorted rubbish that you no longer need if the relevant program is deleted. Some of these, such as entries made into the Windows-like *Registry* are best left alone unless you're very familiar with how the registry system works. If you feel confident, advanced file managers such as Resco Explorer (www.resco-net.com) incorporate a registry editing facility.

For general housekeeping, it's a good idea to periodically take a look around your Pocket PC folder structure and root out those items that are obviously no longer needed. As always, be warned that removing anything that's associated with a program that's still installed can cause major problems, including data loss, but because Pocket PC files and folder tend to have good, descriptive names, there are a number of instances when it's completely safe to delete. In the Program Files folder in your internal memory, you can safely remove folders whose names correspond to programs you know you've already deleted. Check any sub-folders first, though, to ensure that you're not deleting other programs with the same developer name, as program folders are often named after their software company rather than the name of the program itself.

On storage cards and flash memory, you'll find separate folders in the top-level direc-

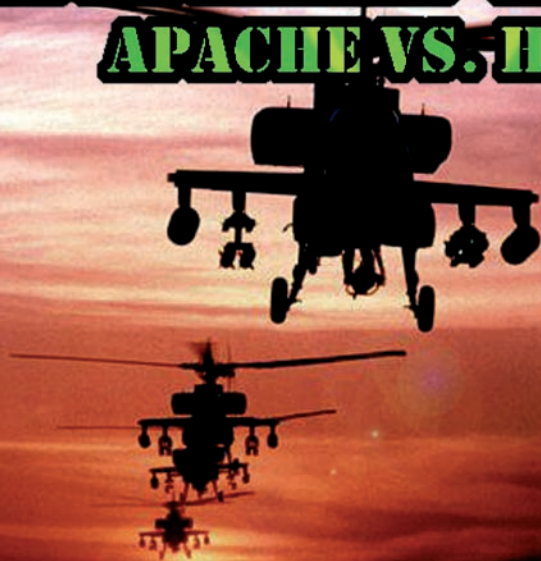
tory for each program that's been installed there rather than in internal memory. Again, it's fine to remove those that relate to programs you've already deleted.

Getting a little more involved, the My Device\Windows\AppMgr folder will often contain one or two ('.dat' and '.dll') files relating to deleted programs. Carefully remove these to free up a few kilobytes of extra space. There may also be an assortment of related (deletable) files elsewhere in the My Device\Windows folder, but exercise extra caution here, as it's sometimes less clear which filenames relate to which programs. Finally, take a look in My Device\Windows\Help from time to time, where you may find old help files that are no longer needed. You'll undoubtedly spot other files elsewhere that you may be tempted to remove. In general, resist the temptation to delete unless you're completely sure what you're doing, and always perform a full backup before attempting a major clean-out exercise.

If ever you find yourself in a real pickle with a program that simply refuses to de-install or won't remove its entry from the Remove Programs screen, try a complete reinstallation, then try to remove everything a second time. If that fails, either try to remove it via ActiveSync on the PC, or contact the program developer for advice.

HELLFIRE

APACHE VS. HIND



BEYOND THE FRONT LINE



AVAILABLE FOR PALM OS® & WINDOWS MOBILE™ for POCKET PC

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The GAME ZONE

The hottest new games on the handheld scene...

FISH TYCOON (Palm OS)

With most of the obvious 'Sim' themes already done, we're seeing software companies moving onto some more quirky (albeit nicely original) ideas. This beautifully executed aquarium simulation has you nurturing up to three tankfuls of fish, selling ever more exotic breeds in order to upgrade your shop and purchase various tank decorations (to draw in more buyers, of course). You'll also need money to buy rare fish eggs, and treatments for diseases such as 'Ick'—little white spots that multiply and gradually kill off your stock. The game's pace is decidedly pedestrian, as it runs in 'real time', even when you exit the game, and even when your handheld is switched off. That's part of the attraction though—the idea is that you pop back into Fish Tycoon perhaps half a dozen times a day, and leave it running over a period of weeks, tending to your fish with necessary food and medication, and breeding more stock as you go along. There's really no excitement to the gameplay as such—that's not the point. There's an undeniable fascination in watching the little animated swimming fish grow and flourish (or not, depending upon your skills). There is an ultimate aim to the game, based around a little back story that involves discovering the 'Seven Magic Fish of Isola'. This requires you to cross-breed the right combinations of fish to create the desired results, which adds a good element of skill and memory. Not a game for action fans, but entertaining nonetheless, and probably a good cure for stress. \$15, from www.ldw.com.

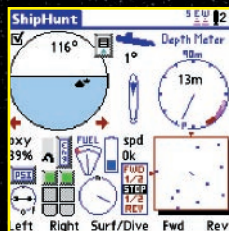


PLANT TYCOON (Palm OS)

Don't be put off by the humorous thought of a garden simulation game. Plant Tycoon comes from the same software developers as Fish Tycoon (above), and is every bit as polished. The two games are almost identical in execution, with the same concepts of real time gameplay and common modes of play. As with Fish Tycoon, there's a really excellent tutorial that pops up during the course of the game, triggered whenever you do something new that you need guidance on. This completely removes the need to consult the manual, and gets you up and running immediately. The back story this time around is to create 'magical' plants with selected cross-pollination and nurturing. To start off with you'll need to take a few pots, add water, soil and seeds, and watch as your plants mature. You then sell mature plants in the garden centre to pay for exotic seeds, insect repellent, plant food and the like. In common with Fish Tycoon, it's more a question of fascination than tension, but can be quite satisfying and surprisingly addictive once you've been running your nursery for a while. \$15, from www.ldw.com.

SHIPHUNT PRO (Palm OS)

A simulation that's designed to get the adrenaline flowing, Ship-Hunt Pro sets you up as a WWII U-boat commander, tasked with sinking a fleet of enemy vessels. This is a new version of the game with improved colour graphics and more sophisticated gameplay. The chunky text and images still wouldn't win any awards, but beyond the basic appearance lies an absorbing game with a very authentic feel. There are a number of options to add extra realism and complexity, but even at its simplest level you'll need to keep a close eye on your fuel, submarine batteries, oxygen and engine status to avoid suffocating the crew or running out of power at the bottom of the sea. Once you've got the hang of managing the sub, it's time to approach the surface, raise the periscope and take a look at your prey. The hunter can easily become the hunted though, and enemy depth charges and deck cannons can consign you to Davy Jones' locker in no time at all. Regular crew reports help to keep up the tension, with feedback such as "C-C-Captain, C-C-Can't B-B-Breath..." as you're about to run out of oxygen. You'll need to study the instructions for a few minutes to figure out how everything works, and invest several hours to become proficient, but it's a rewarding experience. \$17, from www.shiphunt.com. Also available in a more basic version, ShipHunt, at \$10.



6TH GEAR (Palm OS)

If you remember Sega's Outrun driving game from 1980s amusement arcades, you may find 6th Gear irresistible. The only disappointment is that the selection of cars has been updated from the original open-top Corvette, and you won't find the original blonde-haired passenger with flowing locks, blowing in the breeze for effects. Everything else looks very much like the original, though, complete with cheesy cruisin' music and screeching tyres. You can set up your car for either manual or automatic gearchange, auto-cruise, and for whether or not damage is inflicted as you hit cars and obstacles along the way. You get to choose from five landscapes from desert to city streets, with optional rain or snow. You can race against the clock, one-on-one against an opponent or in a full 15 race tournament, and the action is suitably frenetic as you try to stay on the road and weave in and out of the traffic. As an alternative to the usual hardware button controls, you can use stylus drags for steering, braking and acceleration, which with a little practice works very well. Very retro and lots of fun. \$10, from www.chronotech.co.za.

DAEDALUS 3D (Palm OS / Symbian Series 60)

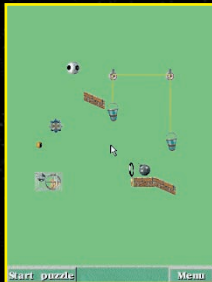
If you're in the mood for a little mindless violence, this first-person shoot-em-up won't disappoint. The ultra-smooth 3D-rendered graphics and stereo sound are remarkably close to desktop Doom and Quake quality, making Daedalus 3D a mightily impressive achievement from this new developer. Your mission is to kill all the aliens inhabiting the Martian fortress, which looks more like a fantasy dungeon setting than a sci-fi scene. The dark corners and stone walls all add to the suspense though, as you creep around 23 levels, shooting anything that moves. 'Aliens' range from gorilla-looka-



likes to heavily armed women in stockings(!), and they all shoot on sight. There are no subtleties such as a map of the area to work with or puzzles to solve—just kill all the enemy, picking up new weapons and power crystals along the way. You can map your movement to hardware buttons if you wish, but stylus control works superbly well, with keystrokes reserved for jumping, shooting, and so on. Also available in a Symbian Series 60 version, and with expansion packs to follow soon. \$30, from www.daedalus3d.com.

HELLFIRE: APACHE VS. HIND (Palm/PPC)

This battle between Cold War US and Soviet attack helicopters is pure shoot-em-up rather than flight simulation, but addictive nonetheless. All you have to do is steer, fire and switch between your three weapon types, while dodging enemy fire from air, ground and sea-based forces. As well as destroying the enemy, some of the missions involve landing your chopper to pick up and rescue hostages, all handled with supremely slick animation and hi-res graphics. There are 16 missions and several alternative scenarios, covering scenery from desert to tundra. The only criticism is that the variety of enemies is limited to around half a dozen types, and the missions are all variations on a few basic themes, which limits the long-term playability a little. The game has real atmosphere though, and the realistic helicopter and weapons sound effects are great if you're playing with headphones on. \$20, from www.astraware.com.



THE AMAZING WORLD (Palm/PPC/Series 60)

Inspired by the classic The Incredible Machine for DOS PCs and the now-discontinued Puzzles-in-Motion for Palm OS, this delightful collection of 71 logic puzzles is a real treasure. Each level contains a variety of fixed objects on screen, including brick walls, torches, footballs, tennis balls, candles, magnifying glasses, buckets, pulleys, conveyor belts, bombs, ostriches, guns, rabbits and carrots. A seemingly weird mix, but each has its purpose. You're given a small selection of extra objects that you place on screen, ready to initiate a chain reaction. Each level has a different layout and objective: say to set off a bomb. Your job is to position the objects in order to make it all work. When you're happy with the layout, a quick tap sets everything in motion: a ball drops under the force of gravity, actuates a pulley, which moves another ball, which drops onto a torch, which switches it on, whereby the light is focussed by a magnifying glass to ignite the bomb's fuse—you get the general idea. Everything follows the basic laws of physics, with balls bouncing and buckets swinging convincingly on lengths of rope, which adds enormously to the fascination of this ingenious game. The interface can be a little fiddly, as you try to position each item with pinpoint accuracy, and the hi-res Palm OS version uses ultra-tiny graphics that are uncomfortably small to view. There's a very good tutorial to get you started, but the demo version of the program only allows you to try a single level, which will rightly put off some potential buyers. Criticisms aside, this is still one of the very best puzzle games around, and should provide hours of brain-teasing fun. \$15, from www.amazingworldgame.com.

S.A.I.S (Palm OS/Pocket PC)

Otherwise known as Strange Adventures in Infinite Space, it's all about boldly going where no one has gone before, as evidenced by the giveaway shape of the tiny spaceships on screen. Its primarily a strategy game, broadly along similar lines to the classic Elite, in which you 'explore' your surrounding area of space, trading and engaging in combat where necessary—in this case all within a limited timespan of no more than 20 minutes or so. It doesn't boast the flashiest graphics ever seen and the game has a fairly unremarkable interface, but there's an intelligent back story which adds greatly to the fun, with lots of different aliens, upgrades and artefacts to discover with each new adventure. If you prefer the battle side of things, there's a combat mode that's 100% fighting, but this is less satisfying than the standard game mode, which has enough variety to keep you playing for many, many hours. Engage! \$20, from www.astraware.com.



POCKET MINI GOLF (Pocket PC)

'Crazy' golf rather than the serious stuff, you don't need the slightest interest in the sport to enjoy Pocket Mini Golf. A combination of charming Japanese anime-style cartoon graphics and a truly superb play mechanism make this an exercise in good game design that puts all too many other game designers to shame. Rounded off with great music and sound effects, this is one of the slickest all-round pieces of game programming around. Rather than using a tricky sequence of timed taps to control your shots, there's a basic mode with one action to set your ball direction, another to set the stroke power, then a third to shoot. So quick

and easy is the control that you'll soon be doing a full 18-hole round in about 15 minutes. With just three courses to play and two difficulty settings, you'll all-too-soon be limited to bettering your previous scores or playing against the clock. The small number of courses is undoubtedly a disappointment, but the basic game is so good that you'll still get your money's worth of enjoyment before you tire of them. Something we'd normally consider unforgivable, there's absolutely no demonstration version available, requiring you to pay in full without any tryout beforehand. Despite this, Pocket Mini Golf is so good that it's one of those rare cases where we'd suggest to just hand over your money and enjoy. \$13, from www.momentumgames.com. A Palm OS version is currently available for the Tapwave Zodiac, with a generic Palm OS 5 and Symbian Series 60 version coming soon.

LEGACY (Symbian UIQ/Nokia 9210/Series 60/Palm OS/Pocket PC)

Legacy, recently released for the Nokia 9200 series communicators, has to be the most demanding game ever released for this memory-limited platform, needing 5MB of your storage card and 3.1MB of execution memory (RAM), a

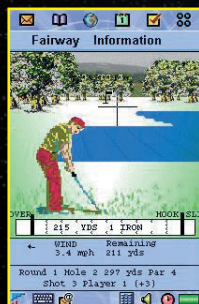
figure which it's hard to achieve without rebooting every time you want to play the game. A patience-testing 20 seconds after launching Legacy, it kicks into life and you're off, in a rich world of dungeons and dragons, emperors and sorcerors, exploring, buying/selling and



fighting. Yes, this sort of thing has all been done before, but never this well and never on this computing platform. The controls are simple, using mainly spacebar, arrow keys and the Enter key, with other action keys noted on screen at the appropriate points. Legacy is well crafted, with enough characters and detail that even hardened adventurers will take a good number of hours to complete it all. Technical highlights include on-screen rain, flickering fires and good sound effects, although we'd sacrifice a little wizardry and speed to be able to reduce the requirement for all that RAM. \$20, from www.redshift.hu.

FAIRWAY (Symbian UIQ/Nokia 9210/Psion)

Originally designed for the Psion Series 3a in 1995, Fairway has now been ported over to UIQ, courtesy of the new OPL runtime module. It's all here, from the sound effects to finely-honed tournament play, but you'll need a golfing brain and the reflexes of a cat to control the power bar accurately enough to defeat the field. Fairway takes few shortcuts and a 72-hole tournament is just that, taking a couple of hours to play through completely. However, it's easy to switch away to other programs and generally get on with your life, with Fairway staying in memory if possible and saving your position if forced to close, perhaps because of a backup or running a demanding Internet application. There are a few imperfections and idiosyncrasies (each hole is randomly generated, for example), some of which are forced by the current beta state of OPL itself, but for true golfers, Fairway is as fun as it has always been. £12, from 3lib.ukonline.co.uk.



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VEXED (Symbian UIQ/Series 60/Nokia 9210/Palm OS)

Like Fairway, Vexed is another recent port of an established Psion/Nokia 9210 game onto UIQ (plus Series 60 and Palm OS). And like Fairway, it inherits a few minor quirks from the current state of the OPL runtime. But the puzzles themselves are first rate, having appeared in many forms on many other computing platforms over the years. The idea is to drag each patterned block around until it meets its partner, whereupon both disappear. The catch is that gravity is everything and blocks can only fall. Finding the right sequence of moves for each of the hundreds of possible levels is what Vexed is all about, and will separate the serious puzzle fans from the casual gamer. Freeware, from www.freepoc.org.



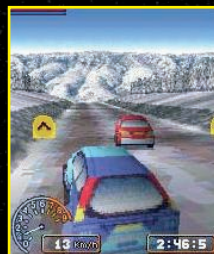
LOCK 'N' LOAD (Symbian UIQ/Series 60)

Firmly in the Doom mould, Lock 'n' Load is no less playable for being derivative. The plot is familiar: explore different levels, collecting powerups and key cards, opening doors and generally blasting anything that moves. The 3D rendering and frame rate are superb and compare well with counterparts on a full-size PC. Slightly awkward at first, all player movement is done using the stylus on on-screen forward/back/rotate icons, but you do get used to this in time. Shooting is nominally by tapping on your weapon or on the screen above it, but when in a hurry to waste an incoming enemy, it's handier to fire using the Jog Dial. The difficulty level is about right, catering for both beginners and experts across the 10

levels supplied. Our only real complaint is that things get a little monotonous—once you've seen one twisty maze section, you've seen them all. \$13, from www.handango.com.

RALLYPRO CONTEST (Symbian UIQ/Series 60)

Sadly not in the same league as V-Rally (reviewed in issue 7), RallyPro Contest suffers massively by virtue of seemingly having had a fortune sunk into its graphics (the various rally scenes are very well drawn and modelled) and nothing at all invested in its interface or playability. For starters, steering on the P800 is by tapping on two huge buttons (not shown here) beneath the main behind-car view. There's no hint at subtlety here, it's just left or right and feels artificial from the word 'Go'—surely there's scope for using UIQ's touch-sensitive screen here, for finer and more continuous control? Things are made worse by the modelling of your rally car's throttle, mapped from the position of the P800's Jog Dial. This is fine in theory but, if left alone, the throttle stays wide open rather than closing slowly, and thus needs conscious attention in terms of deceleration. Put the often wide-open throttle and the crude steering system together and you'll spend most of your time simply manoeuvring back onto the road. \$10, from www.handango.com.



It's all in the INTERFACE

A powerful handheld computer is useless if you can't input and access data conveniently and effectively. We look at current PDA interfaces and add-ons, and what's to come...

No matter how many megahertz of processing power or pixels of screen display your handheld can boast, it's all of little use if you can't input data efficiently, or quickly access what's already there. Here we take a look at the principal technologies at our disposal for getting data into PDAs and otherwise interfacing with them.

Hung up on keyboards

When it comes to inputting data, a lot of users believe that a QWERTY keyboard is the only satisfactory interface. In particular, laptop users and those accustomed to the superb 'typeable' keyboard of the Psion Series 5 range seem particularly reticent to accept modern, keyboardless handhelds as a valid alternative.

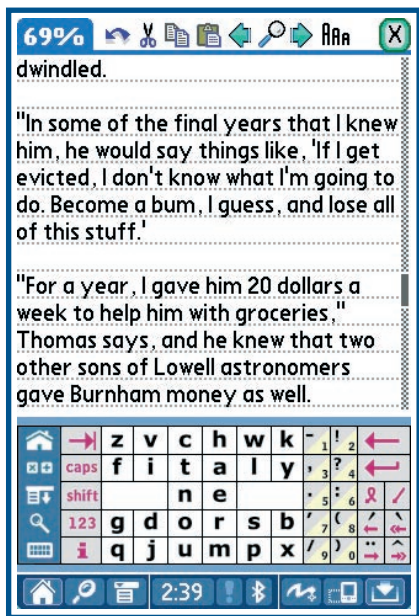
In reality, the main benefit of a typeable keyboard is its familiarity rather than any inherent strength as a means of entering text. Most people type with only a few fingers anyway, and those of us who can touch-type at 60 words per minute or so on a full-sized QWERTY keyboard are usually reduced to less than half that on anything physically smaller—including the legendary Psion Series 5.

Even if you're a die-hard fan of 'real' keyboards, consider that pop-up (on screen) keyboards such as those on Symbian UIQ, Palm OS and Pocket PC devices benefit from having all the 'keys' very close together, which helps to reach speeds that approach the average user's performance on a desktop computer, as you peck from key to key using a stylus on the touch-sensitive screen.

If you use a Palm OS or Pocket PC device and wish to attain the maximum possible input speeds, The Fitaly input system (www.fitaly.com) is well worth investiga-



The Psion Series 5mx. Don't think typeable keyboards are the only effective means of entering text into your handheld



Fitaly for Palm OS and Pocket PC offers perhaps the fastest input system of all

tion. Based around a completely non-standard letter layout that groups all the most commonly used (English language) letters into a tiny group no bigger than the footprint of an SD memory card, Fitaly input effectively reduces hand movements while typing to almost nothing. The system takes a little perseverance to learn, because of its unique layout, but we've found speeds of 60 words per minute quite feasible after a few months of practice. The Fitaly keyboard is available as a 'virtual' on screen keyboard for Pocket PCs and 320x480 Palm OS models, or as a stick-on plastic overlay that covers the Graffiti input area on traditional Palm OS devices.

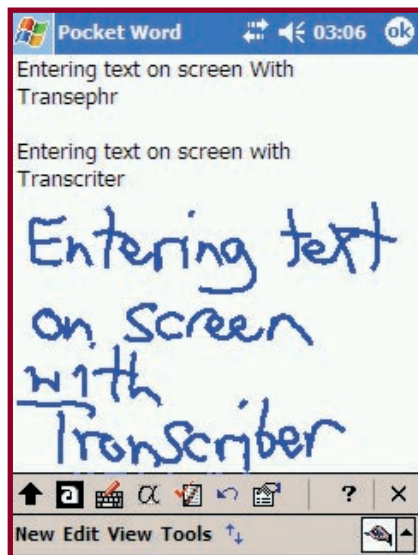
If you can't face learning a completely new input method, a number of good alternative pop-up keyboards are available for both Palm OS and Pocket PC.

Squiggles and scribbles

Most devices without a physical keyboard also offer some kind of gesture recognition system so you can scribble text directly onto the touch-sensitive screen, or in a small window beneath the main screen area. Most current versions are derivatives of CIC's Jot system: Graffiti 2 on Palm OS, Letter Recognizer on Pocket PC and Hand-writing recognition on Symbian UIQ, which means there's almost nothing new to learn when switching from one PDA to another.

Though this kind of text input is quick to learn and generally very accurate, few people manage sustained speeds of more than 10-15 words per minute without fatigue. This makes it fine for entering addresses and quick jottings, but impractical for word processing or extensive note-taking, where the pop-up keyboard is invariably more efficient.

Pocket PCs also include Transcriber, which (in principle, at least) allows you to scribble



Pocket PC's Transcriber in action

'normal' text onto the screen, either as separate letters or cursive (joined-up) handwriting. Accuracy varies a lot from user to user, largely depending upon how tidy your writing is, but many people get decent results. The add-on CalliGrapher (www.phatware.com) generally beats Transcriber for accuracy, and adds a number of extra editing features that make it worth trying out if you're less than satisfied with the latter.

Although there's currently no equivalent handwriting recognition system for Palm or Symbian OS, Decuma's OnSpot (www.decuma.com) is now available for Palm OS (as well as Pocket PC), and provides an intuitive way to enter and edit 'normal', separate letters on screen. It's certainly not the fastest way to input text, but avoids the need to learn special characters/gestures.

Pick and mix

No matter which input system you prefer, there's no need to stick exclusively with one. An on-screen keyboard is invariably quicker, but gesture recognition feels more natural to most people, and can be done without even looking at the screen. If you



Symbian Series 60 and Microsoft Pocket PC Phone Edition devices are limited by their lack of touch screen input or keyboard

have a large-screened Palm Tungsten T3 or similar, it's even possible to use the pop-up keyboard and Graffiti 2 simultaneously.



Decuma's OnSpot is intuitive, if rather slow

Touch screen—or not

If your particular handheld lacks a touch-sensitive screen, as with Symbian Series 60 and Pocket PC Phone Edition devices, your text input options are severely limited. Both systems rely on 'T9'-style predictive text input via their phone keypads. Although used by millions of mobile phone users worldwide, largely for creating millions of SMS text messages every day, most of us find it barely adequate for anything beyond one or two sentences at a time.

However, salvation is at hand with the latest generation of Bluetooth folding keyboards (see page 15) with for many used may prove an essential purchase.

The Nokia 9200 Series (and forthcoming 9500 Series) models also have no touch screen, but their relatively big, typeable keyboards allow efficient input of large amounts of text without need for a stylus.

Thumb keyboards

A small number of PDAs incorporate tiny built-in keyboards, intended for typing with two thumbs. Such models include the Palm Tungsten C and Treo 600, several Sony Clie models, and the HP iPAQ 4350 (see page 72). These vary widely in usability, due to a combination of overall size, key spacing and tactile feedback. Small fingers aren't necessarily a prerequisite, but a fair

amount of dexterity is certainly helpful. Users tend to either love or hate thumb keyboards, so if you're looking to buy a handheld with one, you'd be well advised to try it out first, to get some idea of how you fare with the tiny keys.

Desktop focus

Important as it is to be able to get data into your PDA when necessary, consider how much you really *need* to input directly into the handheld. Modern PDAs generally offer far more reliable synchronization with your desktop PC than in the Psion era of the 1990s, making it more practical to enter (or transfer) much of your data from the desktop instead. Interfacing with a PDA for many people means being able to access data as much as to input it, and for that purpose even a phone keypad can prove quite adequate.

Full-sized keyboards

If you're a seasoned touch typist wanting to write a lot of long letters and reports while on the move, there's probably no substitute for a full-sized QWERTY keyboard, something no handheld device can provide without resorting to add-ons. Although other input methods may be faster, touch typing (i.e. typing without looking at the keyboard) lets you stream text straight from your brain onto the computer screen without consciously thinking about the process—something heavy computer users (and *anyone* who does a lot of writing) should take the trouble to learn.

Another factor to consider with full-sized keyboards is comfort. No matter how fast you can enter text with a small keyboard, screen taps or scribbles, it almost always becomes uncomfortable after a while, whereas many people can type happily on a desktop keyboard for hours on end.

A desktop-style keyboard for your handheld might seem like a bulky, awkward idea, but



Thumb keyboards can be surprisingly effective for text input, but be sure to try one in your own hands before you buy



A full-sized keyboard may look like a clumsy add-on for a PDA, but many offer desktop quality, and their portability helps serious writers to leave the laptop behind when travelling

it can be stored separately until needed, most models are foldable to reduce their size, and in any case they're a lot less bulky than carrying a laptop computer around. Technology has now advanced add-on keyboards from having to be plugged directly into the PDA, onto infrared or even Bluetooth models that merely need to be placed in close proximity in order to operate. Be aware that most are hinged in the middle, so require a flat, rigid surface to work on.

Navigation

Aside from simply entering text, interfacing with your PDA involves a fair amount of *navigation*, be it scrolling through pages of text or accessing menu options and dialog boxes. For general navigation, touch-sensitive screens are a joy to use, making the process of selecting items on screen much easier than using a mouse on a desktop computer.

In place of the up/down/left/right arrow keys used to navigate on a desktop computer, most modern handhelds incorporate some kind of 5-way navigator, usually in the form of an oversized button

that rocks in all directions, with a central press to select the current item on screen. These vary enormously in usability, as most manufacturers tend to make this control too small and fiddly. As with thumb keyboards, 5-way navigators (often known as D-pads) are best tried out before you buy.

For scrolling functions, the Jog Dial, first widely used in the Sony Clie range, works exceptionally well. Simply 'roll' the little thumbwheel up and down rather than pressing on conventional scroll buttons or a 5-way navigator. A few major handheld manufacturers have chosen to ignore the benefits of the Jog Dial (most notably PalmOne and HP), but almost everyone who has used a PDA with one hails it as a valuable asset.

Speak to me!

With PDA screens becoming clearer and more readable, and ever-increasing processor power making our handhelds more powerful, it's undoubtedly the speed at which we can enter data and navigate that's slowing us down. Handheld operating systems vary in how efficiently they let us access programs and functions—it might

take you three screen taps or keypresses to look up an address or it might take you a dozen—but there's no doubt that we could enter and access everything much faster if only we could simply talk to our handhelds, either to dictate text or speak menu commands.

Voice recognition and dictation software for desktop computers has become quite reliable in recent years, making it feasible to do an appreciable portion of your interaction via a microphone rather than a keyboard and mouse. For handhelds this technology is much less practical, partly because of the more limited processor power available, but mostly because of environmental issues. Most of us are happy to wear a microphone and dictate into a PC at our desk, but most would feel uncomfortable holding up a PDA on a bus and speaking into it. There's also the issue of privacy. Even if you're happy to 'tell' your PDA to look up your bank account details, you most certainly don't want it to speak the numbers back to you out loud in public.

If you'd like to dip a toe into the water with basic voice commands for your PDA, there's currently no solution available for Palm OS

or Symbian UIQ devices. Palm OS handhelds have only recently acquired the necessary processor power for serious voice recognition applications, with the advent of 400MHz XScale processors on the Palm Tungsten T3 and others, so expect to see Palm OS solutions coming into line with Pocket PC in the near future.

Although basic voice command software exists for Symbian Series 60 and Nokia 9200 series devices (see www.neuvoice.com) Pocket PC users have a few alternatives, including a range of products from Neuvoice, and Microsoft's own Voice Command product (www.microsoft.com/windowsmobile). The latter (see review on page 30 of the last issue) is limited to fairly basic voice commands, such as "Call John Smith at work", and "What are my appointments tomorrow?", but it works more reliably than any other competing product we have tried to date, and replies to your questions in a pleasant, intelligible voice.

The future...

Voice recognition isn't the only possible advancement in the PDA user interface. The future will almost certainly bring us



A headset that projects a screen image onto any flat surface, and a PDA with multiple flip-out screens. Two innovative ideas first aired by Psion at trade shows more than three years ago

hi-tech solutions such as virtual holographic 'screens' projected in front of our eyes, or beamed onto a flat surface via an integral projector, as shown in the concept design opposite. Along similar lines, but a little closer to being realised, the forthcoming Canesta Keyboard (www.canesta.com) projects an image of a full-size QWERTY keyboard onto a flat surface, then uses 'Electronic Perception Technology' to detect finger movement over the area where the keyboard is projected, registering 'keystrokes' as you tap away.

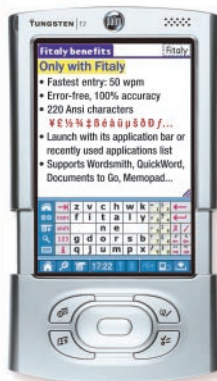
It's probably anyone's guess how we'll be interfacing with our PDAs in 20 years time, but the chances are that most of the input methods we're using today will be going the way of the dodo.



As seen in this concept image, Canesta's 'Electronic Perception Technology' promises to bring us a 'virtual' QWERTY keyboard that can be projected onto any flat surface

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— Gary Krakow MSNBC

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Getting to grips with HanDBase 3

The seventh part of our beginners guide to using this powerful database application for Palm OS and Pocket PC

Following on from the last instalment, we'll continue by introducing seven of the remaining 10 field types that we haven't yet examined in detail.

Time tools

Following straight on from the 'Date' field comes, quite naturally, the 'Time' field. You can think of this as simply a time 'stamp', which will record the time of day in hours, minutes and seconds. When you set up a Time field, you'll see a 'Behaviour' option that requires you to set one of three options: 'Ask User for Time', 'Time Record Added' and 'Time Record Modified'. The first of these is perhaps the most useful, which on a Palm OS device presents a time selection dialog whenever you tap on the field in editing mode. From this, you can select any time of day with precision to the nearest second, or tap on the 'Current Time' option to take a snapshot of the time at that moment. Regardless of whether or not you need precision to the nearest second, note that the resulting value shown on a Palm OS handheld will be displayed only in the format "9:12 am" or "09:12", with seconds not displayed. The full value to the nearest second is always in there, though, and you can extract this by using 'Calculated' fields, which we'll look at later. On Pocket PCs, you'll see a time display window (including seconds) that can be edited at any point,

with a separate pop-up in the field heading to snapshot the current time.

Times are formatted using the 12 or 24 hour clock according to the global settings as set in your handheld's preferences.

If you choose 'Time Record Added' or 'Time Record Modified', HanDBase will automatically insert the relevant time for you, but note that this can still be edited manually if you wish, simply by tapping on the field.

It's important to understand that the Time field contains no information on what day or date it is. If you wish to record both time

Edit Field 2

Field Name **Time**

Field Type: ▼ Time

☒ Visible ☒ Print ☐ Encrypt

Pixels Shown 58

Beh **Ask User for Time**
Time Record Added
Time Record Modified

OK Cancel

Setting up a Time field under Palm OS

and date, you'll need to do it with two separate fields. It will still be possible to perform calculations on combined time/date figures added in this way, such as subtracting one time/date combination from another, as we'll explain in the next instalment.

Link and Linked

We'll look at the more advanced concept of relational databases (i.e. separate database that can be linked together) in detail in a future instalment, but 'Link' and 'Linked' fields go together in pairs, in a relational database system, to allow you to call up one database file from another. By creating a Link field and tapping on the Link button it creates, you can 'drop through' to a separate database containing multiple records that relate to the main database file. As an example, the first database could be used to store clients' contact details, with the second 'Linked' database to hold multiple appointment or call-log details for each separate contact. We'll demonstrate this feature fully as we move on to more complex databases in future issues.

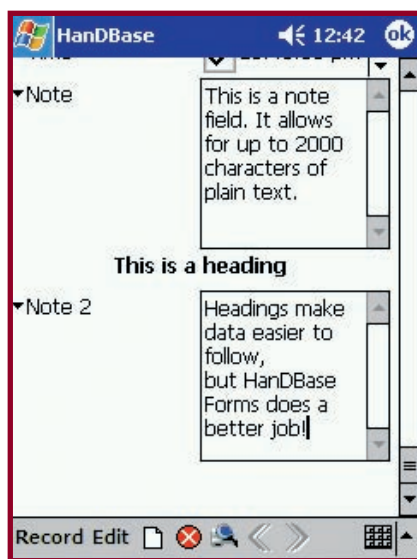
Copious notes

If you're planning to put a lot of descriptive text into a field, it's important to use the 'Note' field rather than a Text field, which limits you to a maximum of 254 characters. With a Note field, you're free to enter up to 2000 characters of text. Unless you're using the HanDBase Forms application, the Palm OS version of the software displays Note fields as a tiny icon (together with the first 20 characters or so from the first line of the note text) that must be tapped on in order to bring up a full-screen, multi-line display from where you can view and edit the current note. Pocket PCs will show a small, editable window directly from the main editing screen (see adjacent screen-shot), but it's still far preferable to set up a larger viewing window in the Forms application if you want to see more than

a dozen words or so at a time. It's not currently possible to add emphases to note text, such as bold or italics—as with all HanDBase fields, you're limited to plain text only.

Simple headings

When using HanDBase without the companion Forms application, the 'Heading' field is nothing more than a string of un-editable text that appears as a divider between your database fields, centralised across the screen. For databases with a lot of fields, this can be useful to delineate them into groups, just for clarity when entering and viewing data. As with Note fields above, if you want to present your databases to make them really clear and easy to work with, HanDBase Forms is the best way to achieve it. Heading fields can still be used in conjunction with the Forms application, but you'll have complete flexibility when it comes to formatting and positioning the headings, and you can use



Note and Heading fields on a Pocket PC

other on-screen elements such as dividing lines and boxes to separate your fields into clear, logical groups. Also, rather than having all the fields of a database presented in a single, scrolling list, you'll be able to divide things into a number of separate screens, with buttons to navigate between them.

DB Popups—not Pop-Ups!

Not to be confused with the much more common 'Pop-Up' field, the 'DB Popup' option allows you to jump from one database to a completely separate one, pick a record, then have HandBase paste the text from a field in that database directly back into the first database. Although at first glance this may look like a relational feature, it isn't, as there's no 'live' link between the two files. At its simplest level, you can use this feature to, say, run one database containing details of project tasks, and then look up the name to paste into the "Task assigned to:" field from a separate database of current employees.

The big advantage of using DB Popup rather than a 'Pop-Up' list is that you won't have to keep jumping back to the Pop-Up

list to add and remove items as the list of options changes. Also, Pop-Up lists are limited to 60 items of 80 characters each. When browsing a database via the DB Popup field, it's possible to switch views, sort, or even filter the database before finally tapping on the record to paste back into the host database.

When using the DB Popup field type, just choose the name of your target database (i.e. the one you're going to use for the look-up) from the 'Other DB Name' line, and the field that you wish to paste in from that database in the 'Other Field Name' line. Note that you can use *any* text field from the target database—it doesn't even need to be visible in the list view of the target database when you make your selection.

To extend the DB Popup feature even further, you can choose up to 10 related fields to be pasted from one database to another whenever you choose a record in the target database. To do this, just set the 'Group (0=none)' line when creating the DB Popup field to match the number of fields that you want to copy across for each record.

As an example, you may want to use the feature to copy across a contact's first name, last name and phone number from one database to another. In this case, set three DB Popup fields in your main database, with appropriate names to match the three fields you're going to pluck from the target database. For each one, set the 'Other Field Name' to match the corresponding field you're fetching from the target database, and for all three DB Popup fields set the 'Group (0=none)' line to "3". Then, when you go back into the original database and tap on the heading of *any* of the three DB Popup fields, selecting a record from the target database will automatically paste the corresponding values into all three fields in the main database. If you need to edit the fields at any point in the future, a quick tap will take you back

Edit Field 5

Field Name: Field 5

Field Type: ▼ DB Popup

☒ Visible ☒ Print ☐ Encrypt

Pixels Shown: 58

Max Characters: 40

Other DB Name: Addresses ▼

Other Field Name: ▼ First name

Group (0=none): 3

☐ Popups Append

OK Cancel Default

Often overlooked, the DB Popup field type can be immensely useful and powerful

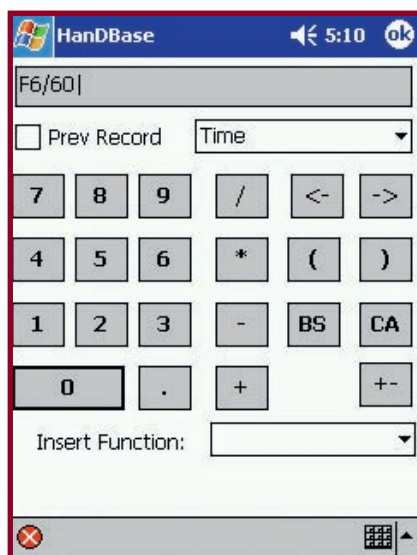
to the target database once again, from where you can select a new record and paste in new values.

Get calculating

The 'Calculated' field type is immensely powerful, as it allows you to perform mathematical functions on other fields (or combinations of fields), much as you would with a spreadsheet application.

When setting up a Calculated field, the first operation is to use the 'Result format' option near the bottom of the screen to set how the resulting figure will be displayed. Then, tap on the 'Configure' button near the centre of the display (see adjacent screenshot) to set up the calculation itself.

The resulting screen looks rather like a simple desktop calculator, but is used to enter the combination of numbers, mathematical operators and database field names that will form the calculation, which will then be applied to the corresponding fields of every record in the database. In the



Setting up a calculated field

next instalment we'll explore the power of calculated fields, and look at the remaining three field types in the HanDBase arsenal.



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Worth a Read

Our regular look at the ever-expanding world of ebooks and ebook-related software for your handheld



Don't think that ebooks are just about high literature and giant spelling dictionaries—there's plenty of light reading available too, from general humour to cartoon comic books.

Cartoons and comics

There's a good range of cartoon strip and comic books available in the popular Mobipocket format from Cartoon eBooks (www.cartoonebooks.com). The Mobipocket Reader does a decent job of rendering images (though you may sometimes need to zoom and pan them to read small captions, depending upon your particular PDA model), so is a good choice for viewing comic books. It works on Palm OS, Pocket PC and all current Symbian devices.

The Cartoon eBooks range includes around 100 titles. There's some good satire to appeal to mature audiences, including cartoon joke books on everything from cats to army life, and lots of sci-fi parodies. Some of the titles contain a significant amount of text too, including history of the cartoonists' work and some interesting background stories on the artwork. There are a few interesting variations on the theme, including 'Pus in Boots', a Star Trek spoof about a zit on one of the characters that grew into a huge, sentient pimple. This is actually the screenplay of an eight page cartoon that was turned into a 40 minute animated film, so is mostly dialog, embellished with around 50 still cartoon images taken from the show.

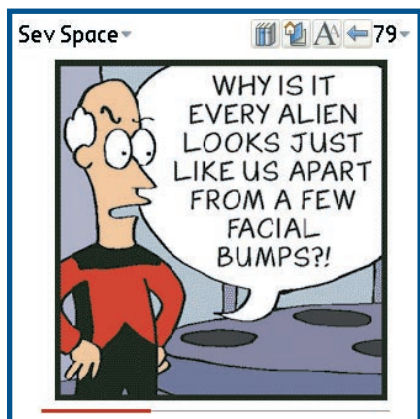
The books all have top quality illustrations throughout, and most contain between 50

and 200 pages of images, squeezed into manageable files no larger than around 2MB. Interestingly, cartoon images seem to look better on screen than they do on paper, with the vivid colours of a modern, quality PDA display really bringing everything to life. Also, the ability to scroll quickly from page to page can almost give the illusion of animation in 'strip' style cartoons. Almost all the titles cost \$5, so at less than £3 each they represent good value for money.

Something light

If cartoons aren't your thing, there's lots of other good light reading around, if you know where to look. For Pocket PC users, the Microsoft Reader ebook site





(www.mslit.com) has a mixed bag of around 100 assorted titles in its 'Humor' section. These range from lawyer jokes and a book of George Bush's most stupid statements, to the more traditional Edward Lear's 'Book of Nonsense'. For something a little more subtle, try 'Who Cut The Cheese: A Cutting Edge Way of Surviving Change By Shifting The Blame', which takes an amusing look at human nature.

The Palm Digital Media site has a slightly bigger and better selection (once again, look in the 'Humor' section), but very much

along the same lines. Popular titles include the irreverent 'Darwin Awards' titles, which look at cases of people who have died as a result of mishaps caused their own stupidity, and Michael Moore's immensely popular 'Dude, Where's My Country', which takes a stab at America's political and corporate culture.

Note that Palm Digital Media has recently been renamed to 'eReader', and the web site is now at www.ereader.com. Much easier to remember, but with all the same content as before. See page 11 for more details on the history of this latest name change.

As is often the case with non-fiction titles from both of the above ebook sites, a fair proportion of the wit tends to have a US focus, so non-US readers should choose titles with a little extra care.

Ensuring that Symbian users get a good choice of light-hearted titles too, the multi-platform Mobipocket site (www.mobipocket.com) also offers around 100 titles in its 'Humor' section, including several books that you'll also find on either the Microsoft or eReader sites.

Always a good place to look for ebooks, whether you're using Microsoft Reader,

The screenshot shows the Fictionwise website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links like 'home', 'register', 'bestsellers', 'new ebooks', and 'PDA hardware'. Below this, there's a search bar and a sidebar with categories like 'Fiction', 'Nonfiction', and 'eBook Bargains'. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'Best Sellers in Humor' and 'Highest Rated in Humor'. Both columns list books with their titles, authors, and a small 'icon explanations' link. The 'Best Sellers' list includes titles like 'Out of Whack' by Jeff Strand and 'Imponderables: The Solution to the Mysteries of Everyday Life' by David Feldman. The 'Highest Rated' list includes 'Out of Whack' by Jeff Strand and 'Dude, Where's My Country' by Michael Moore. At the bottom, there's a 'Browse Humor' section with a 'Display' dropdown menu and a 'Go' button.

eReader or Mobipocket, Fictionwise (www.fictionwise.com) has a great selection of titles in all categories, both fiction and non-fiction, including more than 200 'Humor' books. Some titles on the Fictionwise site are available in all popular formats, but some work with only one or two, so be sure to check before purchasing. As well as a good range of books to suit all flavours of ebook reader software, there's an especially helpful synopsis on most books, together with ratings submitted by customers who have purchased and read the book—admittedly not an absolute indication of quality, but a useful pointer. Also, if you wish to pay an annual fee of \$30 to join Fictionwise's 'Buywise Club', you can get a minimum discount of 15% off everything you buy, plus a range of other special promotions and discounts.

Choosing a reader

On the subject of ebook reader software, we're often asked which is the best one to use. Although we all have our own definite personal preferences, all three of the readers discussed in this article are perfectly usable. If you're a voracious reader, you'll probably want to use all the ebook readers that work on your particular PDA platform, just to ensure that you get access to the maximum number of titles.

If you're a Symbian user then Mobipocket is your only option, if you're on Palm OS then it's Mobipocket and eReader, and for Pocket PC you get the choice of Mobipocket, eReader and Microsoft Reader formats.

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Captain's blog

Are you a blogger? For those not in the know, more and more Internet users are now making use of blogs, online journals that can contain a record of the blogger's thoughts, snippets of information, and any bits of text the publisher thinks the rest of the world may be interested to read.

So, blogs are filled with meaningless daily diaries and personal rants? Not necessarily. In some cases, blogs have highly practical uses, such as providing a way to disseminate news, for clubs and societies to keep members up to date, for web publishers to inform visitors of changes, and for travelers to report on their globetrotting from the nearest cybercafe. Importantly, blogging makes it possible to publish text on the 'net without needing special software or knowledge of web design. Once a blog has been created, using a service such as the one offered for free at www.blogger.com, it can be accessed and added to from a standard web browser from anywhere in the world.

If being tied to a desktop is too much, mobile users may want to make use of a more advanced blogging service. For the ultimate flexibility, it's worth taking a look at recently launched **theZpace**. For a small monthly fee, you can add to your blog in a variety of ways. As well as from a web browser, you can add to your blog from a WAP-enabled mobile phone, by email, or by sending your entry in the form of a text message to a special number. Users

of cameraphones can also upload pictures to their space via MMS. The service offers a load of other features too, such as an online diary, the option to make content public or private, an email and newsfeed service, text alerts, file storage, and the ability to give your friends permission to add to or comment on your blog entries.

If you're interested, see if the free 30 day trial gets you hooked. www.thezspace.com.

On the subject of Blogs, Symbian users may be interested in taking a look at www.symbiandiaries.com, a collection of a dozen or so blogs from various users.



filesaveas.thespace.com
Thursday, June 24, 2004 - 16:54

YOUR ZPACE ON THE NET?

Current status
» filesaveas
[82.69.30.182]
logout

Alerts are On
» Mail: Inbox - 3 2 new

Quick menu
» Site summary
» Topics
» Journals
» Photos
» News
» Events
» Files
» Users
» Recent posts
» Popular posts
» Search
» Mail
» My details
» Main menu

Status
» Settings
» Contact
» Feedback

Create a new item
Journal Create

Home » View » Journals

On The Net
Submitted by **filesaveas** on Thu, 24/06/2004 - 21:51. Id: 105. **General**
In this issue of On The Net, we look at blogging from a PDA. If you're not familiar with the concept of blogging, it's the idea of being able to upload your thoughts to the Internet, without the need for any complex coding knowledge or web software.
» edit | delete

Infinite Cat?
Submitted by **filesaveas** on Thu, 24/06/2004 - 16:45. Id: 104. **General**
You've got to love the Internet – never a day goes by without some new mind-boggling site appearing. The most recent site to catch my eye (and my cat's), is the Infinite Cat Project. The premise is simple... view the current cat, and snap a picture of your feline friend looking at the onscreen cat, who's looking at a cat, who's looking at a cat... Get the idea. Camera phones at the ready, people...
» read more | edit | delete

Message from a mobile
Submitted by **filesaveas** on Thu, 24/06/2004 - 15:37. Id: 103. **General**
Message from a mobile
» edit | delete

Using thespace
Submitted by **filesaveas** on Tue, 22/06/2004 - 11:51. Id: 100. **General**

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« June 2004 »
Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa
1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26
27 28 29 30

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Journals
» Using thespace
24/06/2004 - 16:54
» On The Net
24/06/2004 - 16:52
» Infinite Cat?
24/06/2004 - 16:51
» Message from a mobile
24/06/2004 - 16:45

Farewell to FoxPop?

Sadly, the owners of one of the most comprehensive palmtop sites around have decided to call it a day. **FoxPop** started life as a site dedicated to the GeoFox handheld, but over the last five years expanded to cover all PDAs and handsets. Despite ceasing operations a couple of months back, the site's news page offers comfort in the form of plans to re-launch in a more democratic format—one that requires less maintenance and more collaboration. Keep your fingers crossed, and an eye on www.foxpop.co.uk.

Mobile mags

Something new for users of Java-enabled mobile phones—digital magazines. New players **Three o'clock** are trialling a series of Java magazines containing video clips, interviews and photos that are downloaded to your device. It's free to subscribe, and all you pay for is the data download. The site claims to be offering

60 magazines on a range of topics when it launches fully, and a small selection are available to try right now. At the time of writing, the line-up includes cars, fashion, music, and a magazine for the Euro 2004 football tournament.

www.threeoclock.com

Infinitely entertaining

You've got to love the Internet—never a day goes by without some new mind-boggling site appearing. The most recent site to catch my eye (and my cat's), is the **Infinite Cat Project**. The premise is simple: view the current cat and snap a picture of your feline friend looking at the onscreen cat, who's looking at a cat, who's looking at a cat—get the idea? Camera phones at the ready, people...

www.infinitecat.com

For links to sites visited by On The Net, or to report on a site you think we should visit go to www.filesaveas.com/otn.html.

Hints & Tips

Submit your hints and tips—every published entry wins TWO free issues added to your subscription!

Smart selections again

Palm OS

A useful shortcut along the lines of Peggy Arnott's tip from Issue 6 is 'triple-tap' text selection. Firstly, triple tapping anywhere on a line will select the entire line. Secondly, triple-tapping with the stylus held down on the third tap will allow you to drag your stylus up or down to extend the selection an entire line at a time.

Tomislav Tkalcic, Varazdin, CROATIA

Ditch the paper clips!

Palm OS

After many years of using handhelds, I've learned that fairly regular crashes (soft resets) are a fact of life, at least for those of us who run dozens of programs, some of which inevitably seem to upset the operating system apple cart. Although Palm OS handhelds never seem to lose any data in the process, I was getting tired of having to pull my Sony Clie out of its case every time I needed to poke a paper clip into the reset hole at the back of the machine.

I recently discovered a simple solution—not to the soft resets, sadly, but to the need to poke the reset hole to restore things after each crash. A handy little utility, called, unsurprisingly, 'Crash!', intercepts the soft reset process, automatically restarting the

operating system after five or 10 seconds, without recourse to bits of bent wire or the tip of a stylus. The basic version is free (from www.79bmedia.com), though there's also a more advanced version which keeps a log of your crashes for reference. Heaven knows why Palm seems so intent on reset holes rather than a simple software solution such as this (particularly given the less than perfect stability of modern PDAs), but for me, Crash! has been an absolute godsend.

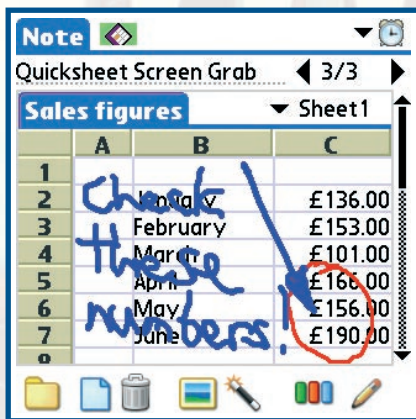
Terence T Palmer, Oxnard, California, USA

Screen grabber

All handhelds

I sometimes find it useful to keep a record of certain screen images on my Palm Tungsten handheld. For instance, rather than having to copy out all my Internet connection settings, it's easier just to take a snapshot of the relevant setup screens on the device itself.

I previously used a dedicated screenshot program for this purpose, but from your last issue discovered BugMe! (www.electricpocket.com). Aside from its main feature of creating electronic 'Post-It' notes on your handheld, it's able to 'grab' a screen image from virtually any other program. Even better, you can then scribble your own notes onto the resulting images. I've found this immensely useful, from documenting



Screenshots can be immensely useful for a variety of uses, including annotated notes

my settings in the preferences screens to annotating spreadsheet fragments for discussion in meetings.

BugMe! is also available for Pocket PC and Symbian devices, but these versions do not currently have the screenshot feature referred to here. For Pocket PC, try *IA Screenshot* instead (www.iastyle.com). For Symbian UIQ, there's *ScreenCapture* (www.yipton.net) - Ed.

Hal Krantz, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Bluetooth scribbles

All handhelds

When I purchased a Bluetooth-enabled PDA recently it was purely for making an Internet connection via my mobile phone. Some time after the purchase (a Palm T2), I discovered BlueBoard and BlueChat, free bundled applications that allow you to enter text and doodles onto the Palm handheld and have them appear immediately on a nearby friend's or colleague's similarly-equipped device. Though probably designed primarily for fun use, I tried the BlueBoard sketching application in an office meeting, where it was a great help

in brainstorming ideas without having to stand up at the whiteboard each time, or lean over someone's shoulder to sketch on their notepad.

If your handheld has a Bluetooth 'chat' facility, it's well worth trying out, as it has a number of useful applications beyond the leisure uses that might cause business users to dismiss the feature out of hand.

Allen Hall, Exmouth, Devon

UIQ power tips

Symbian UIQ

Although it's not in the same league as the third party WorldMate (www.mobimate.com), the P900's Time application can be a surprisingly useful desk and world time clock. Why not assign it to one of the 'top of screen' shortcut slots (Applications | View | Preferences),



Don't dismiss UIQ's handy Jotter application

for quick access? One oddity that you may have noticed is that the second hand disappears after 15 seconds, to save processor power, but you can restore it as many times as you like by simply tapping anywhere on Time's screen.

Another much-maligned application is UIQ's Jotter. Again, it's not quite as flexible as the third party Quickword (www.mobl.com/software), but there's basic text emphasis, bullet paragraph formatting, three levels of zoom and the freehand sketch tab. I use Jotter every day and find it a superb (free) tool.

Stephen Greatbatch, Merseyside

Faster attachments

Pocket PC

If you're running a Pocket PC with a lot of files on it, bringing up a file selection dialog in certain programs can be painfully slow, as the application searches your entire directory tree to compile its file list.



A quicker way to add email attachments

There's usually no easy way around this, but if you're compiling an email that needs a file attachment, there's a sneaky, 'back door' route that's far, far quicker than composing the email message first then using the 'Add Attachment' menu option to take you into the super-slow file selector. The trick is to go into File Explorer *first*, navigate to the file that you want to attach to a message, then tap and hold to bring up the contextual menu. From there, just tap on 'Send via E-mail...' which will jump you straight into Inbox, with the attachment ready to go. You then just need to fill out the email message, but from this point it's infinitely faster.

Graeme Stone, Lund, SWEDEN

Purging ActiveSync

Pocket PC

On occasion I have had to (hard) reset my iPAQ Pocket PC, and each time had to create a new partnership because ActiveSync always claimed that the old one was already in use. I finally tracked the problem down. To fix this, locate the path: C:\Documents and Settings\Username\Application\Data\Microsoft\ActiveSync\Profiles (This is for Windows XP). In this folder you will find folders for each of your previous Pocket PC user names. Rename (or delete if empty) any that are no longer in use, and you can then start ActiveSync and set up a partnership using your previous name.

David Rihoy, Churchdown, Gloucester

Get YOUR name in print!

If you have your own tip or a puzzling question relating to your handheld computer then why not send it in to us?

Send in your entries by mail, fax or email using the contact details given on page 3.

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Palm OS

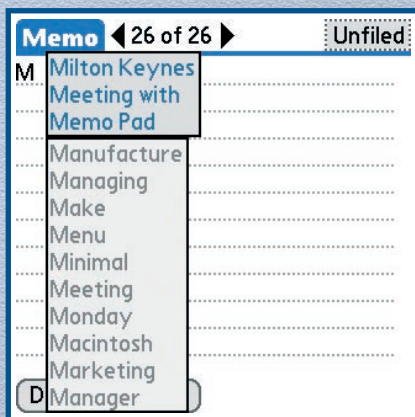
Q When examining a colleague's Pocket PC recently, I noticed a useful feature whereby suggested words appear just above the built-in keyboard as you type, with a quick tap on the word auto-entering it for you. This is a real time-saver, but there doesn't seem to be an equivalent for Palm OS handhelds. Am I missing something?

Allen Long, Barnet, Hertfordshire

A The built-in Pocket PC feature is called Word Completion, but you're stuck with the default (American) spellings, and can't add your own words to its dictionary. There is in fact a much better equivalent for Palm OS users, though you'll have to purchase it separately. TextPlus (www.smartcell.com) not only pops up a list of matching words and phrases as you type, it's completely configurable when it comes to adding or deleting words, and 'trains' itself to show the words you use the most at the top of the list. There's also a good range of foreign language dictionaries available, plus specialist medical dictionaries, etc. TextPlus is especially useful for anyone who uses a lot of complex tech-

nical jargon, as every commonly-used word and phrase can be added to the program's dictionary.

As with the Pocket PC equivalent, TextPlus adjusts its suggested word list as you type each letter, so by the time you've entered two or three letters of any word, the list of suggestions is almost certain to contain the one you're looking for, at which point a quick tap enters the word, complete with a trailing space character if you so wish.



TextPlus—the Palm OS answer to Microsoft's Word Completion

Missing icons

Symbian UIQ / Nokia 9200 / Palm

Q Every time I install a new application, ALL my icons disappear and I have to power my Sony Ericsson P800 down and restart it in order to get them all back again. This is really annoying. Can it be fixed with a firmware upgrade?

Mike Denton, Brighton

A This was a long-standing bug in UIQ and has only been fixed in recent P900 firmware. All information about installed applications is stored in '`\System\Data\Apparc.db`', which is read by the main 'Applications' system task in order for it to display the right icons. Unfortunately, when UIQ needs to change this file (such as when installing something), the file can get locked for long enough to freeze out Applications, which then displays an empty icon list and doesn't bother trying again later.

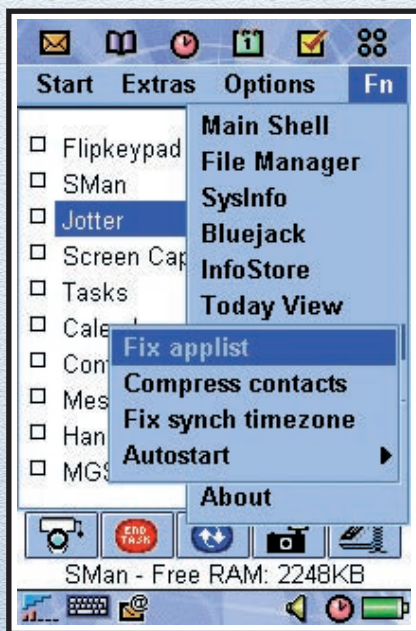
On the P800, the quick fix is to simply eject and re-insert the Memory Stick Duo card, or to use SMan (renegade.w3xs.com/droll.htm), which includes a menu command for restarting Applications. P900 owners reading this should upgrade their firmware to the latest version, from the 'Support' section at www.sonyericsson.com.

Psion to Palm address book

All handhelds

Q I've recently switched from a Psion handheld to a Palm, but I've got no idea how to get all my old address book from the free-form Psion Data application into the new Palm. If I can't figure something out soon, I'm afraid that I'm going to have to re-enter them all by hand.

Stan Flaherty, Walsall, West Midlands



Forcing Applications to refresh its icon lists is just one of SMan's functions

A Because the old Psion Data application allowed you to create your names and addresses in whatever layout suited you, there's no standardisation on how you laid out the various fields corresponding to first name, last name, town, postal code, and so on. For that reason, you're going to have to convert this free-form database into a format that can then be imported by the Palm Desktop application, or to Microsoft Outlook if you're using that instead.

To begin with, use Psion Data's file export facility (found under the 'File' menu) to get the data onto your desktop computer in a suitable *delimited* format. The Psion manual has more information on this, but essentially you need to choose a delimiter character that does not appear anywhere in your data. For instance, if you know that you've got

some commas dotted around within your address records, you'll have to use something different, such as tab or semicolon. If you accidentally choose a delimiter character that appears somewhere in your data, you'll end up jumbling the fields in your exported file, making the data unusable.

Once you've got the delimited file onto your desktop, you'll need to use the import feature in either Palm Desktop or Microsoft Outlook to 'map' the individual fields from your exported Data file. Again, consult the relevant program's help file if you're unsure, but in either case you'll be presented with a list of fields in the exported Psion file that you'll need to match with the corresponding desktop fields before importing.

The biggest bugbear comes if the data in your original file wasn't split down into fields that match the program you're trying to import into. For example, if you simply used a single field for each person's name in your address book (i.e. you have "John Smith" or "Mr John Smith" all in a single field, you'll *have* to split this up into separate fields for 'first name', 'last name' and 'title' before attempting the transfer to Palm Desktop or Outlook. The best way to handle this is to import your file into Microsoft Excel on the desktop first, then add columns for the extra fields that you need to create, then manually copy, cut and paste the various parts of your "Mr John Smith" (or whatever) into separate columns. If you're then exporting into Microsoft Outlook, you can save your file into standard Excel format first, as this appears as one of Outlook's standard import options. If using Palm Desktop, save the spreadsheet into delimited format once again, ready for import.

Converting your address database from an old Psion Data file is invariably the single hardest job when upgrading to a

modern handheld. It may take you a few hours to figure it all out, but once done, the resulting desktop file can quickly be synchronized back to your handheld, be it Palm OS, Pocket PC or Symbian—using Outlook rather than Palm Desktop, of course.

Outlook category troubles

Symbian UIQ / Nokia 9200 / Palm

Q Whatever I do, I can't seem to get my Task categories in Outlook to synchronize to those in Tasks on my new P900. What's the secret?

Jim Plumley, Basingstoke

A There's no secret. Outlook category synchronization only works fully on Pocket PC handhelds, unfortunately. The problem is that Outlook items can be assigned to more than one category, a scheme which conflicts with the 'one-to-one' relationship used on most Symbian and Palm OS handhelds. You'd have thought that the programmers involved could have at least tried to sync the first category in Outlook's list, but sadly not.

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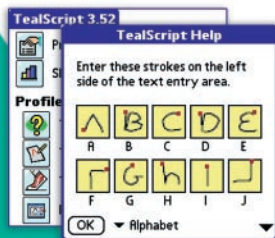
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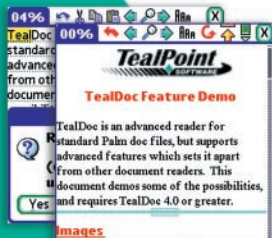


22 award-winning apps for your
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Next issue...

Planned for issue 9:

- ▶ More hardware on test, including new PDAs and communicators from Nokia, HP, Acer and others
- ▶ Ever feel that you're not getting the maximum benefit from your handheld computer? We examine the top 10 features every PDA user should be making use of
- ▶ The office in your hand. A major roundup of word processing and spreadsheeting software for your PDA
- ▶ Handhelds to the max. How far can you take a PDA as an alternative to lugging around a laptop computer? Tips and tricks to help you leave the heavyweight at home
- ▶ Choosing a PDA for multimedia. We compare audio and video performance on each handheld platform
- ▶ On the road with your PDA. More on the latest navigation solutions for the road warrior
- ▶ Wireless update. From faster wireless networking to Bluetooth gaming, the latest developments in wireless technologies and how they will affect PDA users
- ▶ Getting to grips with HandBase—part 8

Plus all the regular features, including news, Hints & Tips, Q&A, Game Zone, Worth a Read, On The Net and much more...